



"HE WAS READY ENOUGH TO COME."

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

EDITED BY
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STAGE IV
THE STORY PORCH

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	PAGE
THE STORY PORCH	9
THE SUMMER SHOWER	11
THE PARADISE OF CHILDREN	13
YUSSOUF	31
THE SHIP OF SPRING	32
THE DAFFODIL'S LULLABY	36
A GENTLE LADY	38
THE BUNDLE OF STRAW	45
THE CHILDREN OF BLENTARN GHYLL	58
A STORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH	66
PENSIONERS	69
PERUONIO	70
THE BAREFOOT BOY	81
BREK FOX	85
SOUTH-WEST WIND, ESQUIRE	93
LEARN THIS	102
THE DANCING FAIRIES	103

	PAGE
THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN"	104
HOUSE ISLAND	106
COACHING IN SUMMER AND WINTER	123
RAIN IN SUMMER	131
JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN	137
FAIRY MEN	149
THE APPLES OF IDUNA	153
THE FAITHFUL BIRD	164
SIGNS OF FOUL WEATHER	165
THE TAR FOR ALL WEATHERS	169
A WANDERING KING—Part I.	172
DECEMBER COLOUR	191
THE LAST DAY OF FLOWERS	193
A WANDERING KING—Part II.	195
LOCHINVAR	201
THE HOMELESS ROYALISTS	205
SPRING	213
TOMMY'S PRANKS	214
A SKATING SONG	226
TOM BROWN	228



“ Now the North wind ceases,
The warm South-west awakes,
The heavens are out in fleeces,
And earth's green 'banner shakes.’

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

STAGE. IV

THE STORY PORCH

THE idea of having a Story Porch was not our own, for we took it from *The Wonder-Book*. Perhaps you know that jolly book with the stories of Greece in times of long, long ago, and a little longer? Well, there is a Story Porch described at the beginning of the book where the children sat "until the rain cleared," and listened to the stories which Eustace Bright told so well.

Now this suited us very well indeed. We had a large summer porch with comfortable seats from which we could look out on our garden. It was a wide and wonderful garden to Pen and Jock (whom you have met before),¹ for the broad smooth lawn was easily turned into a rolling prairie, and the holly, laurel, and myrtle bushes round about it made

¹ See *Progress to Literature*, Stage III., Introductory Chapter.



excellent "cover" And there were wet days in summer, wet but not cold, when the Magician (whom also you have met before) was called out into the porch to play the part of Eastace Bright "until the rain cleared."

As a rule he came quite willingly, though sometimes Pen had to call him twice, and he always bargained that the "Tales of the Porch" were to be those of the open air, stories with sunshine, the scent of flowers, the hum of bees, and the sound of pleasant breezes in them. To this the boy and girl agreed readily enough, for as soon as the really cold weather was over they spent little time in the chimney-corner where the winter's tales had been told. But, as you will see, Pen kept up her custom of demanding the

portraits of the writers who won her favour and these were hung in the place of "honour," ready to look kindly down upon us when the winter should come round again.

• She knew that the writer of *The Wonder-Book* was Nathaniel Hawthorne, and that he belonged to the great country across the ocean which the Magician always spoke of as "The States." She knew also that the book was written during the summer months of June and July many years ago, and that before it went to the printer, the author's own boys and girls knew the greater part of it by heart. Jock and she loved all the stories, but a favourite tale was "The Paradise of Children," which you are to read after you have read the poem which just suited one of the days on which we read *The Wonder-Book* in our Story Porch.

THE SUMMER SHOWER

BEFORE the stout harvesters falleth the grain,
As when the strong storm-wind is reaping the plain,
And loiter's the boy in the briery lar
But yonder, aslant comes the silvery rain,
Like a long line of spears brightly burnish'd and tall.

12 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Adown the white highway like cavalry fleet,
It dashes the dust with its numberless feet.
Like a murmurless school, in their leafy retreat,
The wild birds sit listening the drops round them
beat ;

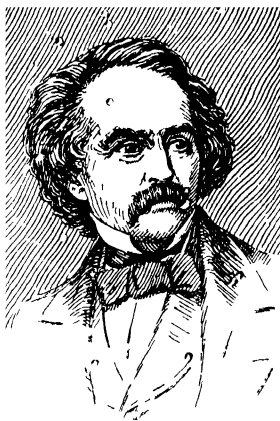
And the boy crouches close to the blackberry wall.

The swallows alone take the storm on their wing,
And, taunting the tree-sheltered labourers, sing,
Like pebbles the rain breaks the face of the spring,
While a bubble darts up from each widening ring ;
And the boy in dismay hears the loud shower fall.

But soon are the harvesters tossing their sheaves ;
The robin darts out from his bower of leaves ;
The wren peereth forth from the moss-covered
eaves ;

And the rain-spatter'd urchin now gladly perceives
That the beautiful bow bendeth over them all.

T. B. READ.



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

THE PARADISE OF CHILDREN

I

LONG, long ago, when this old world was in its tender infancy, there was a child, named Epimetheus, who never had either father or mother; and that he might not be lonely, another child, fatherless and motherless like himself, was sent from a far country to live with him and be his playfellow and helpmate. Her name was Pandora.

The first thing that Pandora saw when she

14 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

entered the cottage where Epimetheus dwelt was a great box. And almost the first question which she put to him, after crossing the threshold, was this :

“ Epimetheus, what have you in that box ? ”

“ My dear little Pandora,” answered Epimetheus, “ that is a secret, and you must be kind enough not to ask any questions about it. The box was left here to be kept safely, and I do not myself know what it contains.”

“ But who gave it to you ? ” asked Pandora.
“ And where did it come from ? ”

“ That is a secret, too,” replied Epimetheus.

“ How provoking ! ” exclaimed Pandora, pouting her lip. “ I wish the ugly box were out of the way ! ”

“ Oh come, don’t think of it any more,” cried Epimetheus. “ Let us run out of doors, and have some nice play with the other children.”

II

It is thousands of years since Epimetheus and Pandora were alive, and the world nowadays is a very different sort of thing from what it was in their time. Then, everybody was a child. There needed no fathers and mothers to take care of the

children, because there was no danger or trouble of any kind, and there was always plenty to eat and drink.

Whenever a child wanted his dinner he found it growing on a tree : and if he looked at the tree in the morning, he could see the expanding blossom of that night's supper ; or, at eventide, he saw the tender bud of to-morrow's breakfast.

It was a very pleasant life indeed. No labour to be done, no tasks to be studied ; nothing but sports and dances, and sweet voices of children talking, or carolling like birds, or gushing out in merry laughter, throughout the livelong day.

What was most wonderful of all, the children never quarrelled among themselves ; neither had they any crying fits ; nor since time first began had a single one of these little mortals ever gone apart into a corner and sulked.

Oh, what a good time was that to be alive in ! The truth is, those ugly little winged monsters called Troubles had never yet been seen on the earth. It is probable that the very greatest trouble which a child had ever felt was Pandora's vexation at not being able to discover the secret of the box.

“ Whence can the box have come ? ” Pandora kept saying to herself and to Epimetheus. “ And what on earth can be inside of it ? ”

"Always talking about this box!" said Epimetheus at last; for he had grown extremely tired of the subject. "I wish, dear Pandora, you would try to talk of something else. Come, let us go and gather some ripe figs, and eat them under the trees, for our supper. And I know a vine that has the sweetest and juiciest grapes you ever tasted."

"Always talking about grapes and figs!" cried Pandora pettishly.

"Well, then," said Epimetheus, who was a very good-tempered child, "let us run out and have a merry time with our playmates."

"I am tired of merry times, and don't care if I never have any more!" answered our pettish little Pandora. "And, besides, I never do have any. This ugly box! I insist upon your telling me what is inside of it."

"As I have already said fifty times over, I do not know!" replied Epimetheus, getting a little vexed. "How, then, can I tell you what is inside?"

"You might open it," said Pandora, looking sideways at Epimetheus, "and then we could see for ourselves."

"Pandora, what are you thinking of?" exclaimed Epimetheus in horror.

"At least," said she, "you can tell me how it came here."

“It was left at the door,” replied Epimetheus, “just before you came, by a person who looked very smiling and intelligent, and who could hardly forbear laughing as he put it down. He was dressed in an odd kind of a cloak, and had on a cap that seemed to be made partly of feathers, so that it looked almost as if it had wings.”

“What sort of a staff had he?” asked Pandora.

“Oh, the most curious staff you ever saw!” cried Epimetheus. “It was like two serpents twisting around a stick, and was carved so naturally that I, at first, thought the serpents were alive.”

“I know him,” said Pandora. “Nobody else has such a staff. It was Quicksilver; and he brought me hither, as well as the box. No doubt he intended it for me; and most probably it contains pretty dresses for me to wear, or toys for you and me to play with, or something very nice for us both to eat!”

“Perhaps so,” answered Epimetheus, turning away. “But, until Quicksilver comes back and tells us so, we have neither of us any right to lift the lid of the box.”

“What a dull boy he is!” muttered Pandora, as Epimetheus left the cottage. “I do wish he had a little more enterprise!”

III

After Epimetheus was gone, Pandora stood gazing at the box. 'She had called it ugly above a hundred times, but, in spite of all that she had said against it, it was very handsome, and would have been quite an ornament to any room in which it should be placed. It was made of a beautiful kind of wood, with dark and rich veins spreading over its surface, which was so highly polished that little Pandora could see her face in it.

The box, I had almost forgotten to say, was fastened; not by a lock, but by a very intricate knot of gold cord. There appeared to be no end to this knot, and no beginning. And yet, by the very difficulty that there was in it, Pandora was the more tempted to examine the knot, and just see how it was made. Two or three times already she had stooped over the box and taken the knot between her thumb and forefinger, but without positively trying to undo it.

"I really believe," said she to herself, "that I begin to see how it was done. Nay, perhaps I could tie it up again, after undoing it. There could be no harm in that, surely. Even Epimetheus would not blame me for that. I need not open the box, and should not, of course, without the foolish boy's consent, even if the knot were untied."



THE CHILDRN NEVER QUARRELED AMONG THEMSELVES

"It must have been a very ingenious person who tied this knot," said Pandora to herself. "But I think I could untie it, nevertheless. I am resolved, at least, to find the two ends of the cord."

So she took the golden knot in her fingers, and pried into the folds as sharply as she could. Almost without intending it, or quite knowing what she was about, she was soon busily engaged in attempting to undo it.

And just then, by the merest accident, she gave the knot a kind of a twist, which produced a wonderful result. The gold cord untwined itself as if by magic, and left the box without a fastening.

IV.

"This is the strangest thing I ever knew!" said Pandora. "What will Epimetheus say? And how can I possibly tie it up again?"

She made one or two attempts to restore the knot, but soon found it quite beyond her skill. Nothing was to be done, therefore, but to let the box remain until Epimetheus should come in.

"But," said Pandora, "when he finds the knot untied, he will know that I have done it. How shall I make him believe that I have not looked into the box?"

And then the thought came into her naughty little heart that, since she would be suspected of having looked into the box, she might just as well do so at once. She could not tell whether it was fancy or no, but there was quite a little tumult of whispers in her ear—or else it was her curiosity that whispered :

“Let us out, dear Pandora—pray let us out ! We will be such nice pretty playfellows for you ! Only let us out ! ”

“What can it be ? ” thought Pandora. “Is there something alive in the box ? Well !—yes !—I am resolved to take just one peep ! Only one peep ; and then the lid shall be shut down as safely as ever ! There cannot possibly be any harm in just one little peep ! ”

But it is time to see what Epimetheus was doing.

This was the first time since his little playmate had come to dwell with him that he had attempted to enjoy any pleasure in which she did not partake. But nothing went right ; nor was he nearly so happy as on other days. There was no mirth in his heart, such as usually made his voice gush out of its own accord, and swell the merriment of his companions,

At length, discovering that, somehow or other he put a stop to all the play, Epimetheus judged it best to go back to Pandora. But, with a hope of giving her pleasure, he gathered some flowers and made them into a wreath, which he meant to put upon her head. The flowers were very lovely—roses and lilies, and orange-blossoms, and a great many more, which left a trail of fragrance behind as Epimetheus carried them along.

And here I must mention that a great black cloud had been gathering in the sky for some time past, although it had not yet overspread the sun. But, just as Epimetheus reached the cottage-door, this cloud began to intercept the sunshine, and thus to make a sudden and sad obscurity.

He entered softly, for he meant, if possible, to steal behind Pandora and fling the wreath of flowers over her head before she should be aware of his approach. But, as it happened, there was no need of his treading so very lightly. Pandora was too intent upon her purpose to hear him. At the moment of his entering the cottage the naughty child had put her hand to the lid, and was on the point of opening the box. Epimetheus beheld her. If he had cried out, Pandora would probably have withdrawn her hand, and the fatal mystery of the box might never have been known.

But Epimetheus himself, although he said very little about it, had his own share of curiosity to know what was inside. Perceiving that Pandora was resolved to find out the secret, he determined that his playfellow should not be the only wise person in the cottage. And if there were anything pretty or valuable in the box, he meant to take half of it to himself. So, whenever we blame Pandora for what happened, we must not forget to shake our heads at Epimetheus likewise.

As Pandora raised the lid, the cottage grew very dark and dismal; for the black cloud had now swept quite over the sun, and seemed to have buried it alive. There had, for a little while past, been a low growling and muttering, which all at once broke into a heavy peal of thunder. But Pandora, heeding nothing of all this, lifted the lid and looked inside. It seemed as if a sudden swarm of winged creatures brushed past her, taking flight out of the box, while, at the same instant, she heard the voice of Epimetheus as if he were in pain.

"Oh, I am stung!" cried he. "I am stung! Naughty, Pandora! why have you opened this wicked box?"

Pandora let fall the lid, and, starting up, looked about her to see what had befallen Epimetheus. The thunder-cloud had so darkened the room that

she could not very clearly discern what was in it. But she heard a disagreeable buzzing, as if a great many huge flies or mosquitoes were darting about. And soon she saw a crowd of ugly little shapes, with bats' wings, looking very spiteful, and armed with terribly long stings in their tails. It was one of these that had stung Epimetheus. Nor was it a great while before Pandora herself began to scream, in no less pain and affright than her playfellow. An odious little monster had settled on her forehead, and would have stung her if Epimetheus had not run and brushed it away.

VI

Now, if you wish to know what these ugly things might be which had made their escape out of the box, I must tell you that they were the whole family of earthly Troubles. There were evil Passions ; there were a great many species of Cares ; there were more than a hundred and fifty Sorrows ; there were Diseases in a vast number of miserable and painful skapes ; there were more kinds of Naughtiness than it would be of any use to talk about.

Now it was impossible, as you will easily guess, that the two children should keep the ugly swarm in their own little cottage. On the contrary, the

first thing that they did was to fling open the doors and windows in hope of getting 'rid of them ; and, sure enough, away flew the winged Troubles all abroad, and so tormented the small people everywhere about that none of them so much as smiled for many days afterwards.

And, what was very singular, all the flowers and dewy blossoms on earth, not one of which had hitherto faded, now began to droop and shed their leaves after a day or two. The children, moreover, now grew older day by day, and came soon to be youths and maidens, and men and women by and by, and aged people before they dreamed of such a thing.

Meanwhile, the naughty Pandora and Epimetheus remained in their cottage. Both of them had been grievously stung, and were in a good deal of pain, which seemed the more intolerable to them because it was the very first pain that had ever been felt since the world began.

Besides all this, they were in a very bad humour, both with themselves and with one another. Epimetheus sat down sullenly in the corner with his back towards Pandora ; while Pandora flung herself upon the floor and rested her head on the fatal box. She was crying bitterly, and sobbing as if her heart would break.

Suddenly there was a gentle little tap on the inside of the lid.

"What can that be?" cried Pandora, lifting her head.

But either Epimetheus had not heard the tap, or was too much out of humour to notice it. At any rate, he made no answer.

"You are very unkind," said Pandora, sobbing anew, "not to speak to me!"

Again the tap! It sounded like the tiny knuckles of a fairy's hand knocking lightly and playfully on the inside of the box.

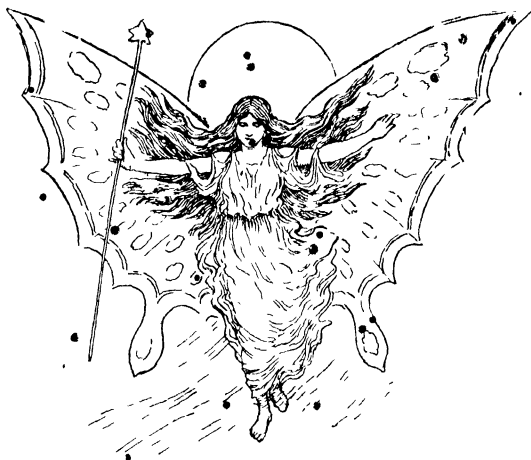
"Who are you?" asked Pandora, with a little of her former curiosity. "Who are you, inside of this naughty box?"

A sweet little voice spoke from within:

"Only lift the lid, and you shall see."

"No, no," answered Pandora, again beginning to sob; "I have had enough of lifting the lid! You are inside of the box, naughty creature, and there you shall stay! There are plenty of your ugly brothers and sisters already flying about the world. You need never think that I shall be so foolish as to let you out!"

She looked towards Epimetheus as she spoke, perhaps expecting that he would commend her for her wisdom. But the sullen boy only muttered that she was wise a little too late.



VII

“Ah,” said the sweet little voice again, “you had much better let me out. I am not like those naughty creatures that have stings in their tails. They are no brothers and sisters of mine, as you would see at once if you were only to get a glimpse of me. Come, come, my pretty Pandora! I am sure you will let me out!”

“My dear Epimetheus,” cried Pandora, “have you heard this little voice?”

“Yes, to be sure I have,” answered he, but in no very good humour as yet. “And what of it?”

“Shall I lift the lid again?” asked Pandora.

"Just as you please," said Epimetheus. "One other Trouble in such a swarm as you have set adrift about the world can make no very great difference."

"You might speak a little more kindly!" murmured Pandora, wiping her eyes.

"Ah, naughty boy!" cried the little voice within the box, in an arch and laughing tone. "He knows he is longing to see me. Come, my dear Pandora, lift up the lid. I am in a great hurry to comfort you. Only let me have some fresh air, and you shall soon see that matters are not quite so dismal as you think them!"

"Epimetheus," exclaimed Pandora, "come what may, I am resolved to open the box!"

"And, as the lid seems very heavy," cried Epimetheus, running across the room, "I will help you!"

So, with one consent, the two children again lifted the lid. Out flew a sunny and smiling little personage, and hovered about the room, throwing a light wherever she went. She flew to Epimetheus, and laid the least touch of her finger on the spot where the Trouble had stung him, and immediately the anguish of it was gone. Then she kissed Pandora on the forehead, and her hurt was cured likewise.

"Pray, who are you?" inquired Pandora.

"I am to be called, Hope!" answered the sunshiny figure. "And because I am such a cheery little body, I was packed into the box to make amends for that swarm of ugly Troubles. Never fear! we shall do pretty well in spite of them all."

"Your wings are coloured like the rainbow!" exclaimed Pandora. "How very beautiful!"

"Yes, they are like the rainbow," said Hope, "because, glad as my nature is, I am partly made of tears as well as smiles."

"And will you stay with us," asked Epimetheus, "for ever and ever?"

"As long as you need me," said Hope, with her pleasant smile—"and that will be as long as you live in the world—I promise never to desert you. There may be times and seasons, now and then, when you will think that I have utterly vanished. But again, and again, and again, when perhaps you least dream of it, you shall see the glimmer of my wings on the ceiling of your cottage. Yes, my dear children, and I know something very good and beautiful that is to be given you hereafter!"

"Oh, tell us," they exclaimed; "tell us what it is!"

"Do not ask me," replied Hope, putting her finger on her rosy mouth. "But do not despair,

even if it should never happen while you live on this earth. Trust in my promise, for it is true."

"We do trust you!" cried Epimetheus and Pandora, both in one breath.

VIII

And so they did; and not only they, but so has everybody trusted. Hope that has since been alive. And, to tell you the truth, I cannot help being glad (though, to be sure, it was an uncommonly naughty thing for her to do)—but I cannot help being glad that our foolish Pandora peeped into the box!

No doubt—no doubt—the Troubles are still flying about the world, and are a very ugly set of imps, and carry most venomous stings in their tails.

But then that lovely and lightsome little figure of Hope! What in the world could we do without her? Hope spiritualizes the earth; Hope makes it always new; and, even in the earth's best and brightest aspect, Hope shows it to be only the shadow of an infinite bliss hereafter!

YUSSOUF

A STRANGER came one night to Yussouf's tent,
Saying, "Behold one outcast and in dread,
Against whose life the bow of power is bent,
Who flies, and hath not where to lay his head ;
I come to thee for shelter and for food,
To Yussouf, called through all our tribes 'The Good.'"

"This tent is mine," said Yussouf; "but no more
Than it is God's ; come in, and be at peace ;
Freely shalt thou partake of all my store,
As I of His who buildeth over these
Our tents His glorious roof of night and day,
And at Whose door none ever yet heard Nay."

So Yussouf entertained his guest that night,
And, waking him ere day, said : "Here is gold ;
My swiftest horse is saddled for thy flight ;
Depart before the prying day grow bold."
As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,
So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

That inward light the stranger's face made grand
Which shines from all self-conquest ; kneeling low,
He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's hand,
Sobbing : "O Sheik, I cannot leave thee so ;
I will repay thee ; all this thou hast done
Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son !"

32 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

“ Take thrice the gold,” said Yussouf, “ for with thee
Into the desert, never to return,
My one black thought shall ride away from me ;
First-born, for whom by day and night I yearn,
Balanced and just are all of God’s decrees ;
Thou art avenged, my first-born, sleep in peace ! ”

J. R. LOWELL.

THE SHIP OF SPRING

LAST night the wind went sweet south-west,
Rocking and singing the world to rest.
But when the meadow floor was dark,
Up in the sunset sang the lark,
Calling across the cloudy hills
To the wind—the merry wind that fills,
Betimes or lazy-lingering,
The magic sail that bears the Spring.

II

Over the hills the call was heard,
Ripples ran as the land-wind stirred
In southern havens white and clear,
Where April slumbers half the year.



And a fairy ship in a sapphire bay
 Slipped her cable and stood away
 Into the North, that lies so far,
 As she dipped to the surge we thought her a star
 Dipping under a sunset bar.

III

For she is a ship of the sky, and rides
 Still to the set of the airy tides.
 The little white moon betwixt her shrouds
 Silvers the spray of the tumbling clouds,
 In halcyon ¹ watches her keelson ² creeps
 From belt to belt of the starry deeps,
 Till the broad red moon at set shall stoop,
 To hang for a lantern on her poop.

IV

An hour ere the day-star raised her flame,
 Into the happiest vale she came,
 And down the warm, soft-blowing dark
 Dropped with music the magic bark ;
 Slid by woodland wharf and quay,
 Where primrose companies stood to see,
 Furl'd her sails like a mist uprolled,
 And moored where a reef of cowslips shoaled.

V

Then they unloaded her merchandise ;
 Tossed from the hatches clouds of spice,

¹ This word means peaceful, calm, or serene but it is really the English form of the Greek word for a kingfisher. According to the Greeks on old the days were always calm when these birds were hatching their young ; hence the present use of the word.

² The piece of timber over the keel.

That drifted away through holt and lane ;
 Next they flung from the hold, like rain,
 Jacinth, emerald, amethyst ;
 And the woodland turned, where the shower-kist,
 Purple under a greening mist.
 Then they opened a thousand bales,
 Each of a thousand Bagdad frails,¹
 Each of a thousand nightingales.
 Next, from silken sacks untied,
 They shook the cuckoos over the side ;
 And tenderly loosed from crystal coops
 Butterfly squadrons and moths by troops :
 The dawn on the dew was coming gray,
 When the last of the swallows was sent away.

VI

And when the hold was empty and clear,
 The ship sailed back till another year.
 And only Alice, who woke at dawn
 To hear the cuckoo across the lawn,
 Saw in the sunrise rose and gray
 A sail like a rose-leaf far away,
 And waved, at her window lingering,
 Good-bye to the ship that brought the Spring.

JOHN HALSHAM.

(By permission.)

¹ Slight baskets of rushes or matting

'THE DAFFODIL'S LULLABY

DAFFADOWNDILLY is sad to-night,
 Heigh Ho, Daffadowndilly !
 Sad for the sun and his golden light,
 For the moon is pale and the stars are white
 And the kiss of the dew falls chilly.

Daffadowndilly is nodding his head,
 Shedding a tear as he turns to his bed.

Heigh Hó !
 Night winds blow
 Over my Daffadowndilly.

Daffadowndilly, the day will rise,
 Peep Bo, Daffadowndilly !
 Lighting his lamp in the eastern skies,
 Fighting the slumber from drowsy-droop eyes,
 Warming my Lenten Lily.

Daffadowndilly in robe of gold,
 King of the meadow, his court will hold.
 Peep Bo !
 Sunbeams glow,
 Waking my Daffadowndilly.



SUNBEAMS GLOW WAKING MY DREAMS DOWN DILLY

A GENTLE LADY

AMONG the portraits in our chimney-corner there was one of Miss Charlotte M. Yonge, whose books made a long red line upon the shelf above the picture. We all loved the kind cheerful face as much as we loved the books, and one day we spent an hour or more "dipping" into a large volume which told all about the authoress. This was a way we had with "grown-up" books, because some of them were only really interesting in parts, at least to all of us.

We knew, to begin with, that Miss Yonge's home was at Otterbourne in Hampshire, and we remembered that quite easily because Gilbert White, who wrote the *Nature Book* we often "dipped" into, lived in the same county; and that was not all, for Charles Kingsley was the rector of Eversley, which is also in Hampshire, while the *Children of the New Forest* was about the same part of the south country. So we had a great deal of interest in that county, the capital of which was once the capital of England. I expect you know the name of the city quite well.

Pen and Joek wanted to know, of course, what Miss Yonge did when she was a little girl. So we



“dipped” and found these paragraphs,¹ in her very own words :

¹ From *Charlotte Mary Yonge*, by C. Coleridge (Macmillan), by permission

"I could read to myself at four years old, and I perfectly recollect the pleasure of finding I could do so, kneeling by a chair on which was spread a beautiful edition of *Robinson Crusoe*, whose pictures I was looking at while grandmamma read the newspaper aloud to my mother. I know the page in the midst of the shipwreck narrative where, to my joy, I found myself making out the sense.

*

"Breakfast and supper were alike in our home, dry bread and milk. I so much disliked the hot bowl of boiled milk and cubes of bread that I was allowed to have mine separately, but butter was thought unwholesome, and I believe it would have been so, for I never have been able to eat it regularly. As to eggs, ham, jam, and all the rest, no one dreamt of giving them to children."

[Pen and Jock looked very thoughtful after listening to this paragraph.]

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"The real zest and joy of existence to me was, however, in the yearly visit to Devonshire. We used to go every autumn, all but grandmamma, in the chariot with post-horses, sleeping either one or two nights on the road. The chariot was yellow, sulphur yellow, lined with dark blue, with yellow blinds and horrid blue and yellow lace. I was always giddy,

often sick, in a close carriage, and the very sight of that blue and yellow lace made me worse, but it was willingly endured for the joys beyond.

“ And there were delights ! Papa read me the *Perambulations of a Mouse* on one of those journeys. Then there was a game in which each counted the animals at the windows on each side, and the first to reach 100 was the winner, or the game was gained by the sight of a cat looking out of the window.

“ In the sword-case we carried our provisions of hard eggs, biscuits, and, as it was called from a mistake of mine, ‘ spotted meat.’ We used to eat this in the middle of the day, and have a mutton-chop tea generally at Honiton. Then what interest there was in rattling up to an inn door and having our tired horses led off, while we watched for the next pair, ridden by a spruce post-boy either in a blue or yellow jacket, white hat, corduroys, and top boots.

“ At last we turned down Sheepstor hill, and while dragging down the steepest part, over the low wall came the square house in sight if we came by day, or if late, the lights glancing in the windows. Mamma used to tell of my shriek of ecstasy at the sight, and even now, at the very thought, my heart swells as if it *must* bound at the sight, though so many of those who made it glad are passed away.

"Our next holiday stage was Plymouth. There 'grandmother with a stick' lived with Aunt Anne at Mount Pleasant. . . . Jeremy was, it seems to me, my greatest cousin friend; we used to play in the garden, walk together on the Hoe and on the slip of beach below that then was fit for children to enjoy. . . .

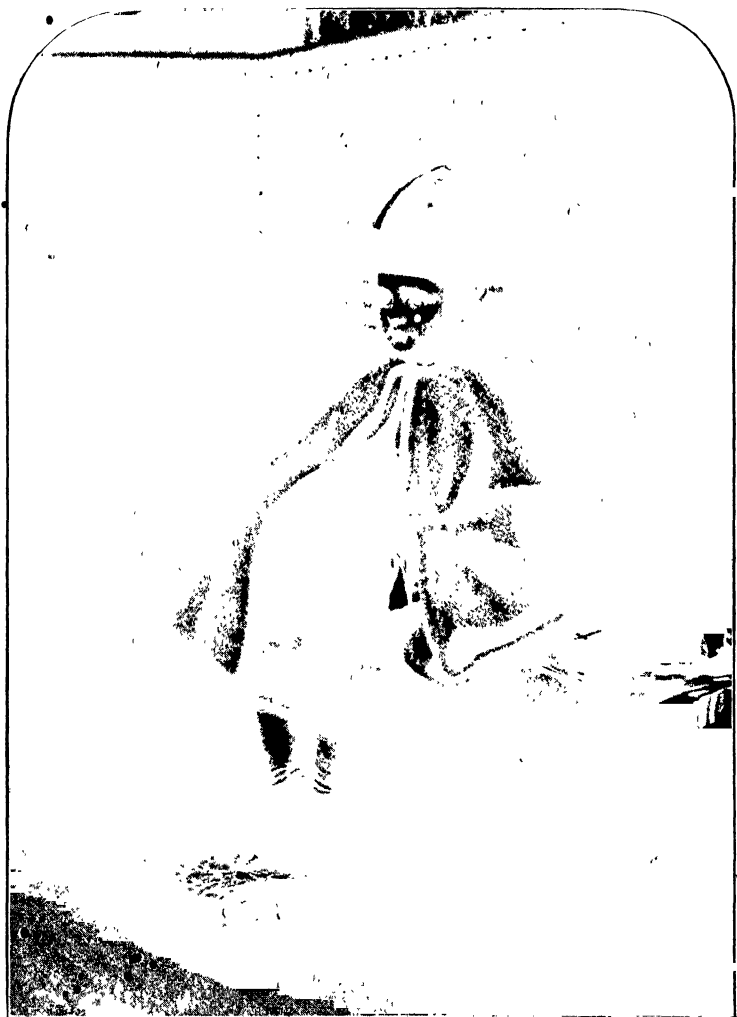
"Then on Sundays we went to church. . . . The pews in the central block were deal painted white, narrow beyond belief, up to the neck of even grown-up people, and provided with ingenious sloping traps to prevent any one from kneeling down.

"In one of these suffocating pews I, a little creature of five or six, once fainted, or nearly so, and my father made me a stool to stand on so as to bring my head within reach of air, and left it to Jeremy when we went away. There was evening service there, and once I went to it in a sedan-chair with grandmamma, who always went thus at night, though I think by day she walked with an 'arm.'

* * * * *

"From Plymouth we always went on to Antony, Uncle Duke's home, on the other side of the Torpoint ferry across the Tamar. There was no steam ferry in those days, one went in an open boat. . . .

"There was a big ferry-boat to take horses, and in this grandmamma used to cross, not getting out



MY FIRST SERMON

*From an engraving after Sir J. J. Mordaunt, P.R.A.
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· MY SECOND SERMON.

*From an engraving after Sir J. E. Millais P.R.A.
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of her carriage because of her lameness, but my mother did not like the crossing with the horses, so we always went in another boat. I remember our rowing once under the *San Josef*, one of the Trafalgar prizes, and looking up, as it rose like a mighty castle above us.

“But there was one crossing, rather late on an autumn day, when the water was rough, and a lady with us cried out, ‘We shall be upset!’ when I shrieked out gleefully, ‘Oh, then we shall catch a fish.’ It is odd that I cannot in the least recollect this, though I do remember how, having been sent on with the maids to walk while my father and mother waited for the carriage, we were overtaken in the dark and picked up, and I made every one laugh again by saying, ‘I’m as wet as a shag.’”

THE BUNDLE OF STRAW

WE used to act this scene from “The Little Duke”, when fresh sweet straw was to be had from the farm over the hill. We tied Jock in a straw bundle at first, but he was too heavy, and his feet *would* stick out. So Pen ran down the lane to the gardener’s cottage and asked whether she might borrow Kenneth, the youngest boy, for half an hour.

46 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

He was ready enough to come, as you can see in the picture on page 2, and the others looked as if they wished to come too ; for they knew that Kenneth would get a jam tart or something like that when he was finished acting little Duke Richard. He did not act the speaking parts, however. You will see from the story below that they are rather hard, and that they require a good deal of action. Pen herself spoke for the Little Duke, and when Osmond got his straw ready they popped Kenneth into the bundle. He seemed to enjoy it greatly, but perhaps it was the thought of the jam tart.

Of course you have to remember that Little Duke Richard of Normandy is the prisoner of King Louis of France, that Osmond (who was played by the Magician because he was strong enough to lift the bundle) is his faithful friend and protector. Now Richard becomes very ill, and Osmond thinks he has been poisoned by the Queen's servants ; but here is the story as Miss Charlotte M. Yonge tells it :

I

All that day and the next Richard continued very ill, and Osmond waited on him very assiduously, never closing his eyes for a moment. At last Richard fell asleep, slept long and soundly for some hours, and waked much better.

Osmond was in a transport of joy. "Thanks to Heaven, they shall fail for this time, and they shall never have another chance! May Heaven be with us still!" Richard was too weak and weary to ask what he meant, and for the next few days Osmond watched him with the utmost care. As for food, now that Richard could eat again, Osmond would not hear of his touching what was sent for him from the royal table, but always went down himself to procure food in the kitchen, where he said he had a friend among the cooks who would, he thought, scarcely poison him intentionally.

When Richard was able to cross the room, Osmond insisted on his always fastening the door with his dagger, and never opening to any summons but his own, not even Prince Carloman's. Richard wondered, but he was obliged to obey; and he knew enough of the perils around him to perceive the reasonableness of Osmond's caution.

Thus several days had passed, the King had returned, and Richard was so much recovered that he had become very anxious to be allowed to go downstairs again, instead of remaining shut up there; but still Osmond would not consent, though Richard had done nothing all day but walk round the room, to show how strong he was.

"Now, my lord, guard the door—take care,"

said Osmond. "And tell your beads while I am gone, that the Saints may bring us out of our peril."

Osmond was absent nearly half an hour, and, when he returned, brought on his shoulders a huge bundle of straw. "What is this for?" exclaimed Richard. "I wanted my supper, and you have brought straw!"

"Here is your supper," said Osmond, throwing down the straw, and producing a bag with some bread and meat. "What should you say, my lord, if we should sup in Normandy to-morrow night?"

"In Normandy!" cried Richard, springing up and clapping his hands. "In Normandy! Oh, Osmond, did you say in Normandy? Shall we, shall we really? Oh, joy! joy! Is Count Bernard come? Will the King let us go?"

"Hush! hush, sir! It must be our own doing; it will all fail if you are not silent and prudent, and we shall be undone."

"I will do anything to get home again!"

"Eat first," said Osmond.

"But what are you going to do? I will not be as foolish as I was when you tried to get me safe out of Rollo's tower. But I should like to wish Carlo-man farewell."

"That must not be," said Osmond; "we should

not have time to escape, if they did not still believe you very ill in bed."

"I am sorry not to wish Carloman good-bye," repeated Richard, "but we shall see Fru Astrida again, and Sir Eric: and Alberic must come back! Oh, do let us go! O Normandy, dear Normandy!"

II

Richard could hardly eat for excitement, while Osmond hastily made his arrangements, girding on his sword, and giving Richard his dagger to put into his belt. He placed the remainder of the provisions in his wallet, threw a thick purple cloth mantle over the Duke, and then desired him to lie down on the straw which he had brought in. "I shall hide you in it," he said, "and carry you through the hall, as if I was going to feed my horse."

"Oh, they will never guess!" cried Richard, laughing. "I will be quite still—I will make no noise—I will hold my breath."

"Yes, mind you do not move hand or foot, or rustle the straw. It is no play—it is life or death," said Osmond, as he disposed the straw round the little boy. "There, can you breathe?"

"Yes," said Richard's voice from the midst. "Am I quite hidden?"

“Entirely. Now remember, whatever happens, do not move. May Heaven protect us! Now the Saints be with us!”

Richard, from the interior of the bundle, heard Osmond set open the door; then he felt himself raised from the ground; Osmond was carrying him along down the stairs, the ends of the straw crushing and sweeping against the wall. The only way to the outer door was through the hall, and here was the danger. Richard heard voices, steps, loud singing and laughter, as if feasting was going on; then some one said, “Tending your horse, *Sieur de Centeville*?”

“Yes,” Osmond made answer. “You know, since we lost our grooms, the poor black would come off badly did I not attend him.”

Presently came Carloman’s voice: “O Osmond de Centeville! is Richard better?”

“He is better, my lord, I thank you, but hardly yet out of danger.”

“Oh, I wish he was well! And when will you let me come to him, Osmond? Indeed, I would sit quiet and not disturb him.”

“It may not be yet, my lord, though the Duke loves you well—he told me so but now.”

“Did he? Oh, tell him I love him very much—better than any one here—and it is very dull without him. Tell him so, Osmond.”

Richard could hardly help calling out to his dear little Carloman, but he remembered the peril of Osmond's eyes and the Queen's threat, and held his peace, with some vague notion that some day he would make Carloman King of France. In the meantime, half-stifled with the straw, he felt himself carried on, down the steps, across the court ; and then he knew, from the darkness and the changed sound of Osmond's tread, that they were in the stable. Osmond laid him carefully down, and whispered :

" All right so far. You can breathe ? "

" Not well. Can't you let me out ? "

" Not yet—not for worlds. Now tell me if I put you face downwards, for I cannot see. "

He laid the living heap of straw across the saddle, bound it on, then led out the horse, gazing round cautiously as he did so ; but the whole of the people of the Castle were feasting, and there was no one to watch the gates. Richard heard the hollow sound of the hoofs as the drawbridge was crossed, and knew that he was free ; but still Osmond held his arm over him, and would not let him move, for some distance. Then, just as Richard felt as if he could endure the stifling of the straw and his uncomfortable position not a moment longer, Osmond stopped the horse, took him down, laid him on the grass, and released him. He gazed round ; they were

in a little wood ; evening twilight was just coming on, and the birds sang sweetly.

“ Free ! free !—this is freedom ! ” cried Richard, leaping up, in the delicious cool evening breeze ; “ the Queen and Lothaire, and that grim room, all far behind.”

“ Not so far yet,” said Osmond ; “ you must not call yourself safe till the Epte is between us and them. Into the saddle, my lord ; we must ride for our lives.”

III

Osmond helped the Duke to mount, and sprang to the saddle behind him, set spurs to the horse, and rode on at a quick rate, though not at full speed, as he wished to spare the horse. The twilight faded, the stars came out, and still he rode, his arm round the child, who, as night advanced, grew weary, and often sunk into a sort of half-dozé, conscious all the time of the trot of the horse. But each step was taking him farther from Queen Gerberge and nearer to Normandy ; and what recked he of weariness ? On—on ; the stars grew pale again, and the first pink light of dawn showed in the eastern sky ; the sun rose, mounted higher and higher, and the day grew hotter ; the horse went more slowly, stumbled,

and though, Osmond halted and loosed the girth, he only mended his pace for a little while.

Osmond looked grievously perplexed, but they had not gone much farther before a party of merchants came in sight, winding their way with a long train of loaded mules, and stout men to guard them, across the plains, like an eastern caravan in the desert. They gazed in surprise at the tall young Norman holding the child upon the worn-out war-horse.

“Sir merchant,” said Osmond to the first, “see you this steed? Better horse never was ridden, but he is sorely spent, and we must make speed. Let me barter him with you for yonder stout palfrey. He is worth twice as much, but I cannot stop to chaffer—ay or no at once.”

The merchant, seeing the value of Osmond’s gallant black, accepted the offer, and Osmond, removing his saddle and placing Richard on his new steed, again mounted, and on they went through the country which Osmond’s eye had marked with the sagacity men acquire by living in wild places.

The great marshes were now far less dangerous than in the winter, and they safely crossed them. There had, as yet, been no pursuit; and Osmond’s only fear was for his little charge, who, not having recovered his full strength since his illness, began to suffer greatly from fatigue in the heat of that

broiling summer day, and leant against Osmond patiently, but very wearily, without moving or looking up.

He scarcely revived when the sun went down and a cool breeze sprang up, which much refreshed Osmond himself; and still more did it refresh the Squire to see at length, winding through the green pastures, a blue river, on the opposite bank of which rose a high rocky mound bearing a castle with many a turret and battlement.

IV

"The Epte! the Epte! There is Normandy, sir! Look up and see your own dukedom."

"Normandy!" cried Richard, sitting upright.

"Oh, my own home!" Still the Epte was wide and deep, and the peril was not yet ended. Osmond looked anxiously and rejoiced to see marks of cattle, as if it had been forded.

"We must try it," he said and, dismounting, he waded in, leading the horse and firmly holding Richard in the saddle. Deep they went; the water rose to Richard's feet, then to the horse's neck; then the horse was swimming, and Osmond too, still keeping his firm hold; then there was ground again, the force of the current was less, and they were gaining the bank.



IHL WADLD IN LEADING IHL HORSL

At that instant, however, they perceived two men aiming at them with cross-bows from the castle, and another standing on the bank above them, who called out, "Hold! None pass the ford of Montemar without permission of the noble Dame Yolande."

"Ha! Bertrand the Seneschal, is that you?" returned Osmond.

"Who calls me by my name?" replied the Seneschal.

"It is I, Osmond de Centeville. Open your gates quickly, Sir Seneschal, for here is the Duke, sorely in need of rest and refreshment."

"The Duke!" exclaimed Bertrand, hurrying down to the landing-place and throwing off his cap. "The Duke! the Duke!" rang out the shout from the men-at-arms on the battlements above; and in an instant more Osmond had led the horse up from the water, and was exclaiming, "Look up, my lord, look up! You are in your own dukedom again, and this is Alberic's castle."

"Welcome indeed, most noble Lord Duke! Blessings on the day!" cried the Seneschal. "What joy for my Lady and my young Lord!"

"He is sorely weary," said Osmond, looking anxiously at Richard, who, even at the welcome cries that showed so plainly that he was in his own

Normandy, scarcely raised himself or spoke. "He had been very sick ere I brought him away. I doubt me they sought to poison him, and I vowed not to tarry at Laon another hour after he was fit to move. But cheer up, my lord, you are safe and free now, and here is the good Dame de Montemar to tend you, far better than a rude Squire like me."

"Alas, no!" said the Seneschal; "our Dame is gone with young Alberic on a pilgrimage to Jumieges to pray for the Duke's safety. What joy for them to know that their prayers have been granted!"

Osmond, however, could scarcely rejoice, so alarmed was he at the extreme weariness and exhaustion of his charge, who, when they brought him into the Castle hall, hardly spoke or looked, and could not eat. They carried him up to Alberic's bed, where he tossed about restlessly, too tired to sleep.

"Alas! alas!" said Osmond, "I have been too hasty: I have but saved him from the Franks to be his death by my own imprudence."

"Hush! Sieur de Centeville," said the Seneschal's wife, coming into the room. "To talk in that manner is the way to be his death, indeed. Leave the child to me—he is only over-weary."



THE CHILDREN OF BLENTARN GHYLL

BLENTARN GHYLL is the name of a little narrow gorge in those Westmorland mountains, called Langdale Pikes, at whose feet lie the lovely green vale and lake of Grasmere.

The lake is fed by mountain streamlets, called in the north becks. One of these becks comes down another beautiful valley called Easedale, sheltered by mountains and green with grass as smooth and soft as on a lawn, from being cropped short by the sheep, which can be turned out here earlier in the spring than on the other mountain-sides.

At one end Easedale opens on the village of

Grasmere ; at the other is a steep ascent, leading to a bare stony ravine, shut in on all sides by high mountains, and with no outlet except the rough descent into Easedale, and likewise a dangerous, winding path about six miles over the mountains to Langdale Head.

This lonely ravine is called Far Easedale, and at the upper end there formerly stood a cottage named Blentarn Ghyll. Ghyll means a cleft worn in the rock by water ; and just above the cottage there is such a cleft, opening from a basin in the rock that must once have been a tarn, or mountain lakelet, but the pool is now dry, and for want of the living eye of sparkling water it is termed Blentarn or Blind Pool.

The cottage was the dwelling of an honest old soldier named George Green, who had taken the little mountain farm and married an active, bustling woman, who kept her home in great order, and regularly sent her children, tidily dressed, to school at Grasmere, whenever the weather did not make the long wild mountain walk impossible for them.

It was in the winter of the year 1807 that there was an auction of furniture at a farm-house at Langdale Head. To this gathering George and Sarah Green set off early in the forenoon of a bright winter day, leaving their cottage and six little ones,

in the charge of the eldest sister, a girl of nine years old, named Agnes, for they had neither indoor nor outdoor servant, and no neighbour nearer than Grasmere.

Little Agnes was, however, a remarkably steady and careful child, and all went well through the day, but towards night the mist settled down heavily upon the hills, and the heavy sighing in the air told that a storm was working up; the children watched anxiously for their parents, but the fog cut off their view, flakes of snow began to fall, and darkness closed in early on them.

Agnes gave the others their supper of milk and oatmeal porridge, and they sat down waiting and watching, and fancying they heard sounds in the hills; but the clock struck one hour after another, and no step was on the threshold, no hand at the latch, no voice at the door—only the white, silent flakes fell thicker and thicker, and began to close up the door and come in white, clinging wreaths through the crevices of the windows.

Agnes tried to cheer the others up, but there was a dread on them all, and they could not bear to move away from the peat fire on the hearth, round which they were nestled.

She put the two youngest, who were twins, to bed in their cradle, and sat on with the others, two boys



and another girl named Catherine, till the clock struck twelve, when she heard them one by one say their prayers, and, doing the same herself, lay down to rest, trusting to her heavenly Father's care. ''

The morning came, and no father and mother—only the snow falling thicker than ever, and almost blocking them in ; but still Agnes did not lose hope ; she thought her father and mother might have taken shelter at night in some *field*, as she would have termed a sheepfold, or that the snow might have prevented them from setting out at all, and they might come home by Grasmere in the morning.

She cheered herself up, and dressed the others,

made them say their prayers, and gave them their breakfast from the scanty store.' She longed to go down to Grasmere to inquire ; but they were entirely cut off by the snow, for the beck was, in the winter, too wide for a child to leap and too rapid to be waded, and the crazy wooden bridge that crossed it had so large a hole in it that, when concealed with snow, it was not safe to attempt the passage.

She thought over all that could be done for the present, and first wound up the clock, a friend that she could not allow to be silent ; next she took all the milk and scalded it, to prevent it turning sour ; then she looked into the meal chest, and made some porridge for breakfast, but the store was so low that she was forced to put all except the babies upon short allowance ; but to reconcile the others to this, she made cakes of a small hoard of flour, and baked them on the hearth.

It was snowing so fast that she feared that the way to the peat stack would be blocked up, and therefore her next work was, with the help of the two boys, to pull down as much fuel as would last for a week and carry it indoors ; and she examined the potatoes laid up in bracken leaves, but fancying that if she brought them in the warmth of the cottage would spoil them, she only took enough for a single meal.

Milking the cow was the next office performed by this orderly little maid, but the poor thing was half-starved and had little to give. Agnes saw that more hay must be given to her, and calling the boys, scrambled with them into the loft and pulled down the hay for that night's supper and bed.

Supper-time came, and after it the motherly child undressed the twins and found voice to sing them to sleep, after which she joined the huddle of the other three, nestled on the hearth, and hour after hour they listened for the dear voices, till they fancied they heard sounds on the howling blast, held their breath, and then, as it died away, were conscious of the silence of the lull.

So fierce was the snow-drift that Agnes had to guard the door and window from admitting long wreaths of it, and protect the fire from being put out as it came hissing down the chimney. Again her watch lasted till midnight, and no parents, no help came ; again she went to bed, and awoke to find the snow falling thicker than ever, and hope failing within her. But she got through this third lonely day by keeping her little flock together on the hearth, and making them say their prayers aloud by turns.

By the following morning the snow was over, and the wind had changed, so sweeping away the

drifts, that a low stone wall had been exposed, which these little ones knew would serve as a guide into Grasmere by a way which would avoid crossing the brook. So Agnes made her way alone, a frail little being in the vast slopes of snow, to the house nearest in Grasmere.

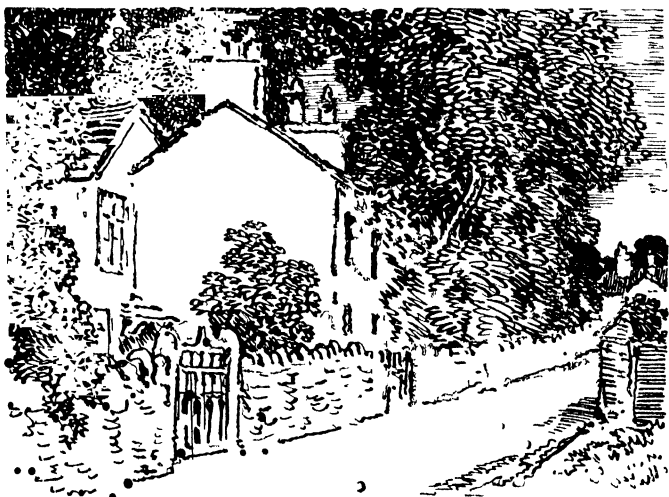
She knocked at the door and was made kindly welcome, but no sooner did she ask for her father and mother than smiles turned to looks of pity and dismay. In half an hour the news that George and Sarah Green were missing had spread through the valley, and sixty strong men had met at Kirktown, the hamlet close to the parish church, to seek for them. The last that was known of them was that after the auction some of their friends had advised them not to try the dangerous path so late; but when they had gone no one knew. Some of the people of Langdale likewise had heard wild shrieks at midnight on the night after the sale, but had fancied them merely the moans of the wind.

One day after another the search continued, but still in vain. The neighbours patiently gave up their work day after day to turn over the deep snow around the path from Langdale, but for three—or some say five—days no trace of them was found.

At last dogs were used, and guided the seekers far away from the path, 'until a loud shout from the

top of a steep precipice told that the lost was found. There lay Sarah Green, wrapped in her husband's greatcoat, of course quite dead; and at the foot of the rock his body was found, in a posture that seemed to show that he had been killed by the fall without a struggle. It was to Dorothy Wordsworth, the sister of the poet, that little Agnes was persuaded to tell the history of this calm, resolute, trustful waiting time, which, simple as it is, we think our readers will own as truly worthy to be counted among Golden Deeds.

CHARLOTTE M. VONGE.



WORDSWORTH'S COTTAGE, GRASMERE.

A STORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH

It was in the winter of 1864 that the three little children of a carpenter named Duff, at a station near Melbourne, were often sent out to gather broom. The eldest was a boy of nine years old; Jane, his sister, was seven; and little Frank was five.

One evening they did not come back, and their parents became alarmed. There are, indeed, in Australia no dangerous wild beasts, such as the bears that two little lost Canadian babes once called to as their father's oxen, "Buck" and "Bell"; but, on the other hand, there are no raspberries, such as sustained those little wanderers—not even the "blackberries" that "dyed the pretty lips" of our own "Babes in the Wood"—only dull gum-trees, with oddly-shaped cones and blue upright leaves, and bark that they shed instead of changing leaves.

Then there are she-oak trees, with hard joints, like overgrown English horse-tails; monstrous nettle-trees, like a bad dream of our English stinging-nettle—all growing in such similar shapes and clusters that it is a most difficult thing for a person once lost to recover his bearings; and, worse than all, the drought is terrible, so that thirst will cause a more painful death than even hunger. Stout men,

sturdy explorers, have been known to lie down, famished, to die in this inhospitable forest; and what could be the fate of the poor little children?

The father and his neighbours in vain shouted, "Cōōee!" (the bush call), and sought the country day after day until a week had passed, when he obtained the aid of some of the natives, who have a wonderful power of tracking the faintest trail in their forests.

They soon made out signs where the children had been from the bendings of the twigs or the trampling of the grass. "Here little one tired," they said; "sit down." Big one kneel down; carry him along. Here travel all night; dark—not see that bush; her fall on him." Then came: "Here little one tired again; big one kneel down; no get up—fall flat on face."

The children had been lost on Friday afternoon. On the Saturday week the blacks led the father up to a clump of broom, where lay three little figures, the least in the middle, with his sister's frock over his own clothes.

Duff went up to them, comforted, at least, that he could carry home the little corpses to their mother. But the eldest boy roused himself, sat up, and said, "Father!" then fell back from sheer weakness; and, indeed, his lips were so shrunk that

they could no longer cover his teeth. Little Frank awoke as if from a quiet sleep. "Father, why didn't you come before?" he said. "We were cooeing for you." Jane was scarcely alive. When she was lifted up she only made a murmur of "Cold! cold!"

If neither had lived to tell the tale, little Frank's condition, so much better than that of his elders, would have told how free from selfishness their behaviour must have been through all that dreadful week. When the elder brother was carried past the places that the blacks had pointed out, his account of their wanderings and adventures exactly agreed with what the natives had inferred.

He said that this whole time they had been without food, and had only had one drink of water—perhaps from the "pitcher plant," which is a native of those woods, and has a wonderfully-shaped cup, which retains water for many weeks. A man had been known to live eleven days in the bush upon nothing but water; but the endurance of these little ones was even more wonderful.

They were all fast recovering; and the feeling of admiration for little Jane was so strong in the colony that a subscription was raised for her, which soon amounted to several hundred pounds.

PENSIONERS

MY pensioners, who daily
Come here to beg their fare,
For all their need dress gaily
And have a jaunty air.
With "Tira-lira-lira—
Now of your charity
Pray help the little brethren
Of noble poverty."

One shines in glossy sable,
One wears a russet coat,
And one who seeks my table
Has red about his throat.
With Tira-lira-lira,
Gay waistcoat, speckled vest,
Black cap and fine blue bonnet,
They come so bravely dressed.

To all I gladly 'scatter
In this their time of need,
Heap bread upon their platter
And ask not for my meed,
But in the jocund spring-time
Their songs give back to me
A thousandfold—my brethren
Of noble poverty.

W. M. LETTS.

(By permission)

PERUONTO

A good deed is never lost. He who sows courtesy reaps benefit ; and he who gathers kindness gathers love. Pleasure bestowed on a grateful mind was never barren, but always brings a good recompense ; and that is the moral of the story I am going to tell you.

ONCE upon a time a woman who lived in a village, and was called Ceccarella, had a son named Peruonto, who was one of the most stupid lads that ever was born. This made his mother very unhappy, and all day long she would grieve because of this great misfortune. For whether she asked him kindly, or stormed at him till her throat was dry, the foolish fellow would not stir to do the slightest hand's turn for her. At last, after a thousand dinnings at his brain, she got him to go to the wood for a faggot by saying, "Come now, it is time for us to get a morsel to eat, so run off for some sticks, and don't forget yourself on the way, but come back as quick as you can, and we will boil ourselves some cabbage, to keep the life in us."

Away went the stupid Peruonto, hanging down his head as if he was going to gaol. Away he went, walking as if he were a jackdaw, or treading on eggs,

counting his steps, at the pace of a snail's gallop, and making all sorts of zigzags and excursions on his way to the wood. And when he reached the middle of a plain, through which ran a river, growling and murmuring at the bad manners of the stones that were stopping its way, he saw three youths who had made themselves a bed of grass and a pillow of a great flint stone, and were lying sound asleep under the blaze of the Sun, who was shooting his rays down on them point-blank.

When Peruonto saw these poor creatures, looking as if they were in the midst of a fountain of fire, he felt pity for them, and, cutting some branches of oak, he made a handsome arbour over them. Meanwhile the youths, who were the sons of a fairy, awoke, and, seeing the kindness and courtesy of Peruonto, they gave him a charm, that everything he asked for should be done.

II

Peruonto, having performed this good action, went his way towards the wood, where he made up such an enormous faggot that it would have needed an engine to draw it: and, seeing that he could not in any way get it on his back, he set himself astride of it, and cried, "Oh, what a lucky fellow I should be if this faggot would carry me off!"



WITH FIGS AND RAISINS, FILL ME WITH!

Now the word was hardly out of his mouth when the faggot began to trot and gallop like a great horse, and when it came in front of the King's palace it pranced and capered and curvetted in a way that would amaze you. The ladies who were standing at one of the windows, on seeing such a wonderful sight, ran to call Vastolla, the daughter of the King, who, going to the window and observing the caracoles of a faggot and the bounds of a bundle of wood, burst out laughing—a thing which, owing to a natural melancholy, she never remembered to have done before.

Peruonto raised his head, and, seeing that it was at him that they were laughing, exclaimed, “Oh, Vastolla, I wish that I could be your husband, and I would soon cure you of laughing at me!” And so saying, he struck his heels into the faggot, and in a dashing gallop he was quickly at home, with such a train of little boys at his heels that if his mother had not been quick to shut the door they would soon have killed him with the stones and sticks with which they pelted him.

.II

Now came the question of marrying Vastolla to some great prince, and her father invited all he

knew to come and visit him and pay their respects to the Princess. But she refused to have anything to say to any of them, and only answered, "I will marry none but the young man who fode on the faggot." So that the King got more and more angry with every refusal, and at last he was quite unable to contain himself any longer, and called his Council together, and said :

"You know by this time how my honour has been shamed, and that my daughter has acted in such a manner that all the chronicles will tell the story against me, so now speak and advise me. I say that she is unworthy to live, seeing that she has brought me into such discredit, and I wish to put her altogether out of the world."

The Councillors, who had in their time learned much wisdom, said, "Of a truth she deserves to be severely punished. But, after all, it is this audacious scoundrel who has given you the annoyance, and it is not right that he should escape through the meshes of the net. Let us wait, then, till he comes to light, and we will discover the root of this disgrace, and then we will think it over and resolve what were best to be done." This counsel pleased the King, for he saw that they spoke like sensible, prudent men, so he held his hand and said, "Let us wait and see the end of this business."

IV

So then the King made a great banquet, and invited every one of his nobles and all the gentlemen in his kingdom to come to it, and set Vastolla at the high table at the top of the hall, for, he said, "No common man can have done this, and when she recognises the fellow we shall see her eyes turn to him, and we will instantly lay hold on him and put him out of the way." But when the feasting was done, and all the guests passed out in a line, Vastolla took no more notice of them than Alexander's bull-dog did of the rabbits; and the King grew more angry than ever, and vowed that he would kill her without more delay.

Again, however, the Councillors pacified him, and said, "Softly, softly, your Majesty! quiet your wrath. Let us make another banquet to-morrow, not for people of condition but for the lower sort. Some women always attach themselves to the worst, and we shall find among the cutlers and bead-makers and comb-sellers the root of your anger, which we have not discovered among the cavaliers."

This reasoning took the fancy of the King, and he ordered a second banquet to be prepared, to which, on proclamation being made, came all the riff-raff and rag-tag and bob-tail of the city, such as

rogues, scavengers, tinkers, pedlars, sweeps, beggars, and such like rabble, who were all in high glee; and, taking their seats like noblemen at a great long table, they began to feast and gobble away.

Now, when Ceccarellà heard this proclamation, she began to urge Peruonto to go there too, until at last she got him to set out for the feast. And scarcely had he arrived there when Vastolla cried out without thinking, "That is my Knight of the faggot." When the King heard this he tore his beard, seeing that the bean of the cake, the prize of the lottery, had fallen to an ugly lout, the very sight of whom he could not endure, with a shaggy head, owl's eyes, a parrot's nose, a deer's mouth, and crooked legs. Then, heaving a deep sigh, he said, "What can that daughter of mine have seen to make her take a fancy to this ogre? Ah, vile, false creature, who has cast so base a spell on her? But why do we wait? Let her suffer the punishment she deserves; let her undergo the penalty that shall be decreed by you, and take her from my presence, for I cannot bear to look longer upon her."

V

- Then the Councillors consulted together, and they resolved that she, as well as the evil-doer, should be

shut up in a cask and thrown into the sea ; so that, without staining the King's hands with the blood of one of his family, they should carry out the sentence. No sooner was the judgment pronounced than the cask was brought, and both were put into it ; but before they coopered it up, some of Vastolla's ladies, crying and sobbing as if their hearts would break, put into it a basket of raisins and dried figs that she might have wherewithal to live on for a little while. And when the cask was closed up it was flung into the sea, on which it went floating as the wind drove it.

Meanwhile, Vastolla, weeping till her eyes ran like two rivers, said to Peruonto, " What a sad misfortune is this of ours ! Oh, if I but knew who has played me this trick, to have me caged in this dungeon ! Alas, alas, to find myself in this plight without knowing how. Tell me, tell me, O cruel man, what incantation was it you made, and what spell did you employ, to bring me within the circle of this cask ? "

Peruonto, who had been for some time paying little attention to her, at last said, " If you want me to tell you, you must give me some figs and raisins." So Vastolla, to draw the secret out of him, gave him a handful of both ; and as soon as he had eaten them he told her truly all that had befallen him,

78 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

with the three youths, and with the faggot, and with herself at the window ; which, when the poor lady heard, she took heart and said to Peruonto, “ My friend, shall we then let our lives run out in a cask ? Why don’t you cause this tub to be changed into a fine ship and run into some good harbour to escape this danger ? ” And Peruonto replied :

“ If you would have me say the spell,
With figs and raisins feed me well ! ”

So Vastolla, to make him open his mouth, filled it with fruit ; and so she fished the words out of him. And lo ! as soon as Peruonto had said what she desired, the cask was turned into a beautiful ship, with sails and sailors and everything that could be wished for, and guns and trumpets and a splendid cabin in which Vastolla sat, filled with delight.

VI

It being now the hour when the Moon begins to play at see-saw with the Sun, Vastolla said to Peruonto, “ My fine lad, now make this ship to be changed into a palace, for then we shall be more secure ; you know the saying, ‘ Praise the Sea, but keep to the Land.’ ” And Peruonto replied :

“ If you would have me say the spell,
With figs and raisins feed me well ! ”

So Vastolla at once fed him again, and Peruonto, swallowing down the raisins and figs, did her pleasure; and immediately the ship came to land and was changed into a beautiful palace, fitted up in a most sumptuous manner, and so full of furniture and curtains and hangings that there was nothing more to ask for. So that Vastolla, who a little before would not have set the price of a farthing on her life, did not now wish to change places with the greatest lady in the world, seeing herself served and treated like a queen. Then, to put the seal to all her good fortune, she besought Peruonto to obtain grace to become handsome and polished in his manner, that they might live happy together. And Peruonto replied as before :

“ If you would have me say the spell,
With figs and raisins feed me well ! ” . .

Then Vastolla quickly opened his lips, and scarcely had he spoken the words when he was changed, as it were, from an owl to a nightingale, from an ogre to a beautiful youth, from a scarecrow to a fine gentleman. Vastolla, seeing such a transformation, clasped him in her arms, and was almost beside herself with joy. Then they were married, and lived happily for years.

Meanwhile the King grew old and very sad, so that, one day, the courtiers persuaded him to go a-hunting, to cheer him up. Night overtook him, and, seeing a light in a palace, he sent a servant to know if he could be entertained there ; and he was answered that everything was at his disposal. So the King went to the palace, and passing into a great guest-chamber he saw no living soul but two little boys, who skipped around him, crying, " Welcome, welcome ! "

The King, surprised and astonished, stood like one that was enchanted, and sitting down to rest himself at a table, to his amazement he saw invisibly spread on it a Flanders tablecloth, with dishes full of roast meats and all sorts of viands ; so that, in truth, he feasted like a King, waited on by those beautiful children, and all the while he sat at table a concert of lutes and tambourines never ceased—such delicious music that it went to the tips of his fingers and toes. When he had done eating, a bed suddenly appeared all made of gold, and, having his boots taken off, he went to rest ; and all his courtiers did the same, and after having fed heartily at a hundred tables, which were laid out in the other rooms.

- When morning came, the King wished to thank the two little children; but with them appeared Vastolla and her husband; and casting herself at his feet she asked his pardon and related the whole story. The King, seeing that he had found two grandsons who were two jewels and a son-in-law who was a fairy, embraced first one and then the other, and taking up the children in his arms, they all returned to the city, where there was a great festival that lasted many days.

From *Stories from the Pentamerone*, by Giambattista Basile, by permission.

THE BAREFOOT BOY

BLESSINGS on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheeks of tan !
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill ;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace ;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy !

- O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,

Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wildflower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood ;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well ;
How the robin feeds her young.
How the oriole's nest is hung ;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine ;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans !—
For eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks ;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy,—
Blessings on the barefoot boy !

O for boyhood's time of June;
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw

Me, their master, waited for ;
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey bees ;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade ;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone ;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall ;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides !
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too,
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy !

O for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread,—
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood.
On the door-stone, gray and rude !
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold ;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra ;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch : pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy !

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can !
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew ;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat :
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground ;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah ! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy !

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

BRER FOX

WE loved the stories of Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox which Uncle Remus¹ told to the little boy and girl; and we had in our chimney corner a fine picture of Brer Fox, which you can see on p. 89. But Pen and Jock were not allowed to read the book for themselves lest it might spoil their spelling; for, as you may know, the old man who told the stories was a negro, and he did not talk as we do. . .

Here is just a small piece of the story set down in the way that Uncle Remus told it. See if you can make it out.

“One day atter Brer Rabbit fool ’im wid dat calamus root Brer Fox went ter wuk en got ’im some tar, en mix it wid some turkentime, en fix up a contrapshun what he call a Tar-Baby; en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot ’er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer ter see wat de news wuz gwineter be.”

You like it very much and you want to hear the rest of the story? No doubt; but what would people say if you began to spell likẽ that? You must ask some one at home to get the book called *Uncle Remus* and read the whole of it to you.”

¹ The stories in their original form are published by Messrs. Routledge.

86 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

You cannot wait, you say, to hear the rest of the Tar-Baby story? Well, then, I will tell it to you in English as faithfully as I can.

Brer Fox didn't have to wait long, for by-and-by here comes Brer Rabbit pacing down the road lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity, just as saucy as a jay-bird.

Brer Fox lay low.

Brer Rabbit came prancing along till he spied the Tar-Baby, and then he sat up on his hind legs as if he was greatly astonished.

The Tar-Baby sat there, and Brer Fox lay low.

"Morning!" says Brer Rabbit. "Nice weather this morning," says he.

The Tar-Baby said nothing and Brer Fox lay low.

"How do your symptoms seem to be this morning?" says Brer Rabbit, says he.

Brer Fox winked his eye slowly and lay low; and the Tar-Baby said nothing at all.

"How are you coming on, then? Are you deaf?" says Brer Rabbit, says he. "Because if you are, I can shout louder," says he.

The Tar-Baby stayed still and Brer Fox lay low.

"You're stuck-up, that's what you are," says Brer Rabbit, says he, "and I'm going to cure you, that's what *I'm* going to do," says he.

Brer Fox chuckled in his throat, but the Tar-Baby said nothing at all.

"I'm going to teach you how to talk to respectable wits," says Brer Rabbit, says he. "If you don't take off that hat and tell me how-dye-do, I'm going to knock you down," says he.

Tar-Baby stayed still and Brer Fox lay low.

Brer Rabbit kept on asking him, and the Tar-Baby kept on saying nothing, till presently Brer Rabbit drew back his fists, and blip! he struck her on the side of the head, and that was just where he broke his treacle-jar. His fist stuck, and he could not pull it loose. The tar held him.

But the Tar-Baby stayed still and Brer Fox lay low.

"If you don't let me loose, I'll knock you again," says Brer Rabbit, says he; and with that he struck her a blow with the other hand, and that stuck too.

Tar-Baby said nothing and Brer Fox lay low.

"Turn me loose before I knock you inside out," says Brer Rabbit, says he; but the Tar-Baby said nothing. She just held on, and then Brer Rabbit lost the use of his feet in the same way.

Brer Fox lay low.

Then Brer Rabbit squealed out that if the Tar-Baby didn't turn him loose he would butt her; and then he butted and his head got stuck. Thereupon

88 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Brer Fox sauntered forth looking just as innocent as a mocking-bird.

"How-dye-do, Brer Rabbit?" says Brer Fox, says he. "You look rather stuck-up this morning," says he, and then he rolled on the ground and laughed and laughed till he could laugh no more.

"I expect you'll take dinner with me this time, Brer Rabbit," says he. "I've laid in some calamus root, and I'm not going to take any excuse," says Brer Fox, says he.

"Well, I expect I've got you this time, Brer Rabbit," he went on. "You've been running round here worrying me a long time, but I expect you've come to the end of the row.

"You've been cutting your capers and bouncing round in this neighbourhood until you've come to believe yourself the leader of the whole gang. And then you're always somewhere where you have no business to be.

"Who asked you to come and strike up an acquaintance with this Tar-Baby? And who stuck you up there? Nobody in the round world.

"You just took and jammed yourself on that Tar-Baby without waiting for any invitation," says Brer Fox, says he, "and there you are, and there you'll stay till I fix up a pile of brushwood and set it on fire."



BRE 10X



JOHN RUSKIN

From the copyright photograph by Frederick Hollyer

SOUTH-WEST WIND, ESQUIRE

BEFORE you can use the play which follows, you must understand a little about the Treasure Valley. Then you can act the play as Pen and Jock often did.

In one of the secluded and mountainous districts between Austria and Hungary there was, in old times, a surprisingly rich valley surrounded by steep mountain peaks. From these peaks, which were always covered with snow, a number of torrents fell in constant cataracts ; but, though none of these streams fell into the valley itself, there was so much rain there, its crops were so heavy, its apples so red, its grapes so blue, its wine so rich, and its honey so sweet that it was called the Treasure Valley.

The whole of this little valley belonged to three brothers, called Schwartz, Hans, and Gluck. Schwartz and Hans were good farmers, but they were such cruel, selfish men that every one called them the "Black Brothers." The youngest brother, Gluck, was a twelve-year-old boy ; fair, blue-eyed, and kind in temper to every living thing ; but his elder brothers did not treat him kindly.

One very wet summer the farmers in the country round about had poor crops, but everything in the Treasure Valley prospered. Everybody came to the

94 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Black^o Brothers to buy corn, and went away cursing, because Schwartz and Hans asked such high prices, and refused to give anything to the very poor people who could only beg.

One very cold wet day, when it was drawing towards winter, the two elder brothers went out with their usual warning to little Gluck—who was left to mind the roast—not to let anybody in or give anything out.

SCENE I

Place : The kitchen of the Black Brothers on a cold rainy day.

Characters

SCHWARTZ }
HANS } The Black Brothers.

GLUCK, the youngest brother.

OLD GENTLEMAN (South-west Wind, Esq.).

Gluck (sitting quite close to the fire and turning the meat on the spit). What a pity my brothers never ask anybody to dinner! I'm sure when they've got such a nice piece of mutton as this, and nobody else has got so much as a piece of dry bread, it would do their hearts good to have somebody to eat it with them.

[A double knock is heard at the house door.

Gluck. It must be the wind ; nobody else would venture to knock double knocks at *our* door.

[*The knocking is repeated.* *Gluck looks out of the window and sees a little old gentleman with a very large nose, round cheeks, long hair, merry eyes, and a moustache curled twice round like a corkscrew. He is dressed in an enormous black cloak, and wears a conical-pointed cap with a black feather three feet long.*

Old Gentleman. Hollo ! That's not the way to answer the door. I'm wet—let me in.

Gluck. I beg pardon, sir, I'm very sorry, but I really can't.

Old Gentleman. Can't what ?

Gluck. I can't let you in, sir—I can't, indeed. My brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir ?

Old Gentleman (crossly). Want ? I want fire and shelter ; and there's your great fire there, crackling, blazing, and dancing on the walls, with nobody to feel it. Let me in, I say ; I only want to warm myself.

Gluck (beginning to feel his head very cold). He does look very wet ; I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour. (*Goes round to the door and opens it.*) Come in, sir.

Old Gentleman. That's a good boy. Never mind your brothers. I'll talk to them.

96 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Gluck. Pray, sir, don't do any such thing. I can't let you stay till they come; they'd be the death of me.

Old Gentleman. Dear me, I'm very sorry to hear that. How long may I stay?

Gluck. Only till the mutton's done, sir, and it's very brown now.

[The Old Gentleman sits down on the hob with his cap up the chimney, and the rain falls drip, drip, from his clothes into the cinders. Gluck watches the trickling water for a quarter of an hour.]

Gluck. I beg pardon, sir, mayn't I take your cloak? It seems to be dripping wet.

Old Gentleman. No, thank you.

Gluck. Your cap, sir?

Old Gentleman (gruffly). I am all right, thank you.

Gluck (hesitatingly). But—sir—I'm very sorry, but—really, sir—you're—putting the fire out.

Old Gentleman (drily). It'll take longer to do the mutton, then.

[Gluck turns away at the string for another five minutes.]

Old Gentleman. That mutton looks very nice. 'Can't you give me a little bit?

Gluck. Impossible, sir.

Old Gentleman. I'm very hungry. I've had nothing to eat yesterday nor to-day. They surely couldn't miss a bit from the knuckle!



• 'HOLLO! I'M WET! LET ME IN' •

98 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Gluck (after a pause). They promised me *one* slice to-day, sir. I can give you that, but, not a bit more.

Old Gentleman. That's a good boy.

Gluck (after warming a plate, cuts a piece of the meat). I don't care if I do get beaten for it. 'Oh! some one's knocking.

[He runs to open the door, and Schwartz and Hans enter.

Schwartz. What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?

Hans. Aye, what for, indeed, you little vagabond!

Schwartz (opening the door and seeing the visitor). Bless my soul!

Old Gentleman (taking off his cap and bowing very quickly). Amen!

Schwartz (catching up a rolling-pin). Who's that?

Gluck. I don't know, indeed, brother.

Schwartz (shouting). How did he get in?

Gluck. My dear brother, he was so *very* wet!

[The rolling-pin is just falling on Gluck's head when the Old Gentleman holds out his cap, which receives the blow. The rolling-pin flies out of Schwartz's hand, and falls into a corner of the room.

Schwartz. Who are you, sir?

Hans (snarling). What's your business?

Old Gentleman. I'm a poor old man, sir; and I

FOURTH STAGE

99

saw your fire through the window and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour.

Schwartz. Have the goodness to walk out again, then. We've quite enough water in our kitchen without making it a drying-house.

Old Gentleman. It is a cold day to turn an old man out in, sir ; look at my grey hairs.

• *Hans.* Ay ! There are enough of them to keep you warm. Walk !

Old Gentleman. I'm very, very hungry, sir ; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go ?

Schwartz. Bread, indeed ! Do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such red-nosed fellows as you ?

Hans (sneeringly). Why don't you sell your feather ? Out with you !

Old Gentleman. A little bit !

Schwartz. Be off !

Old Gentleman. Pray, gentlemen !

Hans. Off, and be hanged !

[*Hans seizes the Old Gentleman by the collar,*

• *whercupon the queer old fellow begins to spin*

• *round and round, faster and faster, hitting*

Hans and Schwartz, and sending them flying

into the corners of the room. At last, slapping

his cap on his head, he whirls towards the door.

Old Gentleman. Gentlemen, I wish you a very

100 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

good-morning. At twelve o'clock to-night I'll call again. After such a refusal of hospitality as I have just had, you will not be surprised if that visit is the last I ever pay you.

Schwartz (*muttering*). If I ever catch you here again——

[*The Old Gentleman shuts the house-door with a bang.*]

Schwartz. A very pretty business indeed, Mr. Glück. Dish the mutton, sir. If ever I catch you at such a trick again——bless me, why, the mutton's been cut!

Glück. You promised me one slice, brother, you know.

Schwartz. Oh! and you were cutting it hot, I suppose, and going to catch all the gravy. It'll be long before I promise you such a thing again. Leave the room, sir, and have the kindness to wait in the coal-cellar till I call you!

SCENE II

Midnight; a storm raging; as the clock strikes twelve the brothers are awakened by a tremendous crash.

Schwartz (*starting up in bed*). What's that?

Old Gentleman. Only I.

FOURTH STAGE

101

[The two brothers sit up and stare into the darkness.]

Schwartz. Hans! the room's full of water!

Hans. The roof's gone!

Old Gentleman. Sorry to incommode you. I'm afraid your beds are dampish. Perhaps you had better go to your brother's room; I've left the ceiling on there. You'll find my card on the kitchen table! Remember, the last visit!

Schwartz. Pray Heaven it may!

[At dawn the brothers found the Treasure Valley one mass of ruin and desolation. The flood had swept everything away. On their kitchen table was a small white card, on which, in large, breezy, long-legged letters, were engraved the words:]

*Sorry Best
Kind Soups*

LEARN THIS

THE first character of right childhood is that it is *modest*. A well-bred child does not think it can teach its parents, or that it knows everything. It may think its father and mother know everything—perhaps that all grown-up people know everything; very certainly it is sure that *it* does not. And it is always asking questions and wanting to know more.

Then the second character of right childhood is to be *faithful*. Perceiving that its father knows best what is good for it, and having found always, when it has tried its own way against his, that he was right and it was wrong, a noble child trusts him at last wholly, gives him its hand, and will walk blindfold with him if he bids it.

Then the third character of right childhood is to be *loving and generous*. Give a little love to a child, and you get a great deal back. It loves everything near it, when it is a right kind of child—would hurt nothing, would give the best it has always, if you need it—does not lay plans for getting everything in the house for itself, and delights in helping people; you cannot please it so much as by giving it a chance of being useful, in ever so little a way.

And because of all these characters, lastly, it is *cheerful*. Putting its trust in its father, it is careful

for nothing—being full of love to every creature, it is happy always, whether in its play or its duty.

JOHN RUSKIN.

THE DANCING FAIRIES

SHE comes from the Western Garden,
The Isle of the Evening Star
That drifts in light through the seas of night
Like a rose-flushed nenuphar.
The garden that's dragon-guarded
To-day as in days of old.
The stars in her pathway fall and shoot,
The Hesper Tree is dropping its fruit,
Dropping its burden of gold.

What gift from the Queen of the Fairies ?
What boon for this earth of ours ?
What treasure-hoard in that Garden stored,
What fragrance of mystic flowers ?
The glint of an Apple that's Golden,
The scent of a Rose that's Blue,
And the spray from the Fountain of Youth that clings
In May's first dew to her whispering wings,
These are the gifts that our Lady brings
From the Land where dreams come true.

From W. Graham Robertson's *Pinkie and the Fairies*, by kind permission.

THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX,
GENTLEMAN"

OF course we knew the stories of "The Little Lame Prince" and "The Adventures of a Brownie." And Pen could recite the opening words of the first story with fine effect, making the listener feel quite shivery.

"One winter night, when all the plain was white with moonlight, there was seen crossing it a great, tall, black horse, ridden by a man, also big and equally black, carrying before him on the saddle a woman and a child."

But I am not going to tell you the story of "The Little Lame Prince," for you can easily get it at the library if you do not forget that it was written by Dinah Mulock or Dinah Mulock Craik. And, by the way, you may be able to get it more quickly if you tell the librarian that it was written by the author of *John Halifax, Gentleman*.

Pen had Mrs. Craik's portrait side by side with that of Miss Charlotte Yonge, and thought that they made a splendid pair. She had a special love for both writers, and even Jock thought Mrs. Craik was "a brick" when he heard how she worked hard when only a girl to support her invalid mother and two younger brothers by writing stories for books and for the magazines.

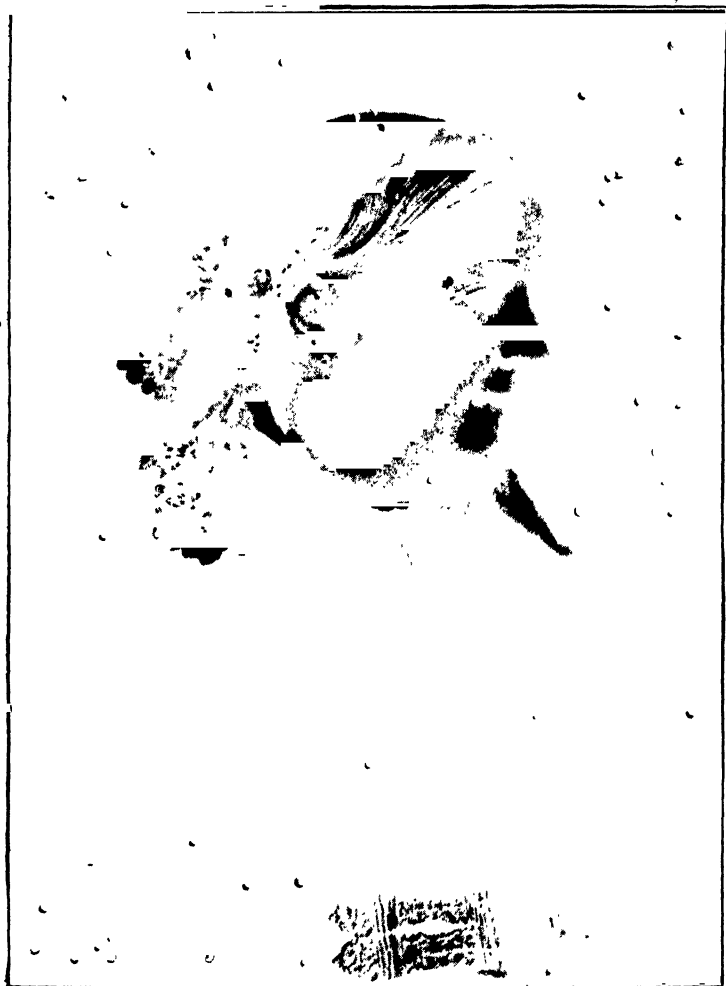


Photo. H. C. Macdonald

MRS CRAIK

It was she who wrote *The Fairy Book* which we had read over and over again. Here is one of the tales from it which was a special favourite.

HOUSE ISLAND

I

THERE lived in Norway, not far from the city of Drontheim, a rich and prosperous gentleman. He had an only daughter called Aslog, the fame of whose beauty spread far and wide. The greatest men of the country sought to wed her, but all were alike unsuccessful in their suit. Her father, who thought his daughter delayed her choice only that she might choose the better, forbore to interfere, and exulted in her prudence. But when, at length, the richest and noblest had tried their fortune with as little success as the rest, he grew angry, called his daughter, and said to her :

“Hitherto I have left you to your free choice, but since I see that you reject all without any distinction, and the very best of your suitors seem not good enough for you, I will keep measures no longer with you. I will break your stubborn spirit. I give you now till the festival of the great Winter-night ; by that time you must make your decision, or prepare to accept the husband whom I myself shall select.”

• Now Aslog secretly loved a youth named Orm, handsome, noble, and brave. She loved him with her whole soul, and would sooner die than bestow her hand on another. But Orm was poor, and poverty compelled him to keep his love as secret as her own.

When Aslog saw the darkness of her father's countenance, and heard his angry words, she turned pale as death, for she knew his temper, and doubted not that he would put his threats into execution. Without uttering a word in reply, she retired to her chamber, and pondered vainly how to escape the storm that hung over her. The great festival approached nearer and nearer, and her anguish increased every day.

At last the lovers resolved on flight. Orm knew a secure place where they could hide until they found an opportunity of quitting the country. So at night, when all were asleep, he led the trembling Aslog over the snow and ice-fields, married her in secret, and then took her away to the mountains.

The moon and the stars lighted them on their way. They had under their arms a few articles of dress and some skins of animals, which were all they could carry. They ascended the mountains the whole night long, till they reached a lonely spot, enclosed with lofty rocks. . . .

POLE MOON AND THE STARS LIGHTED THEM ON THEIR WAY

• Here Orm conducted the weary Aslog into a cave, the low and narrow entrance to which was hardly perceptible, but it soon enlarged to a great hall, reaching deep into the mountain. He kindled a fire, and they now, reposing on their skins, sat in the deepest solitude, far away from all the world.

Orm was the first who had discovered this cave, which is shown to this very day. But as no one then knew anything of it, they were safe from the pursuit of Aslog's father. They passed the whole winter in this retirement, contented and even happy; for they knew they were married, and belonged to one another, and no cruel father could separate them more.

Orm used to go a-hunting, and Aslog stayed at home in the cave, minded the fire, and prepared the necessary food. Frequently did she mount the points of the rocks, but her eyes, did they wander ever so far, saw only glittering snow-fields.

II

The spring now came on: the woods were green; the meadows put on their various colours; people began to wander out for pleasure, and Aslog could but rarely and with great care venture to leave the cave. One evening Orm came in with the intelligence that he had recognised her father's servants in the

distance, and that he could hardly have been unobserved by them. "They will surround this place," continued he, "and never rest till they have found us. We must quit our retreat, then, without a moment's delay."

They accordingly descended on the other side of the mountain, and reached the strand, where they fortunately found a boat. Orm pushed off, and the boat drove into the open sea. They had escaped their pursuers, but they were now exposed to dangers of another kind: whither should they turn?

They could not venture to land, for Aslog's father was lord of the whole coast, and they would infallibly fall into his hands. Nothing remained, then, for them but to commit their bark to the wind and waves.

They were driven along the entire night. At break of day the coast had disappeared, and they saw nothing but the sky, the sea, and the waves. They had not brought one morsel of food with them, and thirst and hunger now began to torment them. Three days did they toss about in this state of misery, and Aslog, faint and exhausted, saw nothing but certain death before her.

At length, on the evening of the third day, they discovered an island of fair size, and surrounded by a number of smaller ones. Orm immediately steered for it; but just as he came near it there suddenly

arose, and the wind, and the sea rolled every moment higher and higher. He turned about with a view of approaching it on another side, but with no better success: his vessel, as often as it neared the island, was driven back as if by an invisible power.

"God help us!" he cried, and looked on poor Aslog who seemed to be dying of weakness before his eyes. But scarcely had the exclamation passed his lips when the storm ceased, the waves subsided, and the vessel came to the shore without encountering any hindrance. Orm jumped out on the beach; some mussels that he found on the strand strengthened and revived the exhausted Aslog, so that she was soon able to leave the boat.

The island was overgrown with low dwarf shrubs, and seemed to be uninhabited; but when they had reached the middle of it they discovered a house, which appeared to be half under the surface of the earth. In the hope of meeting with human help, the wanderers approached it. They listened, but the most perfect silence reigned there.

III

Orm at length opened the door, and they both walked in; but what was their surprise to find everything regulated and arranged as if for in-

112 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

habitants, yet not a single living creature visible. The fire was burning on the hearth in the middle of the room, and a kettle with fish hung on it, apparently only waiting for some one to take the food out and eat it. The beds were made, and ready to receive their wearied tenants.

Orm and Aslog stood for some time dubious, and looked on with a certain degree of awe ; but at last, overcome by hunger, they took up the food and ate. When they had satisfied their appetites, and still discovered no human being, they gave way to weariness, and laid themselves in the beds, which looked so peaceful and inviting to their wearied limbs.

They had expected to be awakened in the night by the owners of the house on their return home, but their expectation was not fulfilled : they slept undisturbed till the morning sun shone in upon them. No one appeared on any of the following days, and it seemed as if some invisible power had made ready the house for their reception. They spent the whole summer in perfect happiness : they were, to be sure, solitary, yet they did not miss mankind. The wild birds' eggs and the fish they caught yielded them provisions in abundance.

When autumn came, a son was born to Aslog. In the midst of their joy at this event they were

surprised by a wonderful apparition. The door opened on a sudden, and an old woman stepped in. She wore a handsome blue dress; there was something proud, but at the same time something strange, in her appearance.

“Do not be afraid,” said she, “at my unexpected appearance. I am the owner of this house, and I thank you for the clean and neat state in which you have kept it, and for the good order in which I find everything with you. I would willingly have come sooner, but I had no power to do so till this little heathen”—pointing to the newborn babe—“was come to the light.

“Now I have free access. Only fetch no priest from the mainland to christen it, or I must depart again. If you will in this matter comply with my wishes, you may not only continue to live here, but all the good that ever you can wish for I will do you. Whatever you take in hand shall prosper; good luck shall follow you wherever you go. But break this condition, and depend upon it that misfortune after misfortune will come on you, and even on this child will I avenge myself.

“If you want anything and you are in danger, you have only to pronounce my name three times, and I will appear and lend you assistance. I am of the race of the old giants, and my name is Guru.

114 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

But beware of uttering in my presence the name of Him whom no giant may hear of, and never venture to make the sign of the cross, or to cut it on beam or board in the house.

“ You may dwell in this house the whole year long, only be so good as to give it up to me on Yule evening, when the sun is at the lowest, as then we celebrate our great festival, and then only are we permitted to be merry. At least, if you should not be willing to go out of the house, keep yourselves up in the loft as quiet as possible the whole day long, and as you value your lives do not look down into the room below until midnight is past. After that you may take possession of everything again.”

When the old woman had thus spoken she vanished, and Aslog and Orm lived without any disturbance, contented and happy. Orm never made a cast of his net without getting a plentiful draught; he never shot an arrow from his bow that it was not sure to hit; in short, whatever they took in hand, were it ever so trifling, evidently prospered.

When Christmas came, they cleaned up the house in the best manner, set everything in order, kindled a fire on the hearth, and as the twilight approached they went up to the loft, where they remained quite still and quiet.

IV

At length it grew dark ; they thought they heard a sound of whizzing and snorting in the air, such as the swans make in the winter-time. There was a hole in the roof over the fireplace which might be opened and shut, either to let in the light from above or to afford a free passage for the smoke. Orm lifted up the lid, which was covered with a skin, and put out his head. But what a wonderful sight then presented itself to his eyes !

The little islands around were all lit up with countless blue lights which moved about without ceasing, jumping up and down, then skipped to the shore, assembled together, and came nearer and nearer to the large island where Orm and Aslog lived.

At last they reached it, and arranged themselves in a circle around a large stone not far from the shore, which Orm knew well. But what was his surprise when he saw that the stone had now completely assumed the form of a man, though a monstrous and gigantic one !

He could clearly perceive that the little blue lights were borne by Dwarfs, whose pale clay-coloured faces, with their huge noses and red eyes, disfigured too by birds' bills and owls' eyes, were supported by misshapen bodies ; and they tottered and wobbled

116 . THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE .

about here and there, so that they seemed to be at the same time merry and in pain.

Suddenly the circle opened, the little ones retired on each side, and Guru—who was the woman Guru, whom Orm recognised immediately, though she had risen in stature and size so as to be almost as gigantic as the stone man—advanced towards it.

She threw both her arms round the image, which immediately seemed to receive life and motion. Then the Dwarfs, with wonderful capers and grimaces, began a song, or, to speak more properly, a howl, with which the whole island resounded and almost trembled at the noise. Orm, quite terrified, drew in his head, and he and Aslog remained in the dark, so still that they hardly ventured to draw their breath.

The procession moved on towards the house, as might be clearly perceived by the nearer approach of the shouting and crying. They were now all come in, light and active ; the Dwarfs were heard jumping about on the benches, and heavy and loud sounded at intervals the steps of the giants.

Orm and his wife listened to the clattering of the plates and the shouts of joy with which they celebrated their banquet. When it was over and midnight drew near, they began to dance to that ravishing fairy-tune which some have learned by listening to the underground musicians.

• As soon as Aslog caught the sound of this air, she felt an irresistible longing to see the dance. Nor was Orm able to keep her back. "Let me look," said she, "or my heart will burst." She took her child and placed herself at the extreme end of the loft, whence, without being observed, she could see all that passed. Long did she gaze, without taking off her eyes for an instant, on the dance—on the bold and wonderful springs of the little creatures, who seemed to float in the air, and not so much as to touch the ground, while the ravishing melody of the Elves filled her whole soul.

The child, meanwhile, which lay in her arms grew sleepy and drew its breath heavily, and, without ever thinking on the promise she had given the old woman, she said, "Christ bless you, my babe!"

V

The instant she had spoken the word there was raised a horrible piercing cry. The Dwarfs tumbled head over heels out at the door with terrible crushing and crowding, their lights went out, and in a few minutes the whole house was clear of them and left desolate. Orm and Aslog, frightened to death, hid themselves in the most retired nook they could find. They did not venture to stir till daybreak, and not

till the sun shone through the hole in the roof down on the fireplace did they feel courage enough to descend from the loft. . . .

The table remained still covered as the underground people had left it ; all their vessels, which were of silver, and manufactured in the most beautiful manner, lay upon it. In the middle of the room there stood upon the ground a huge copper kettle half full of sweet mead, and by its side a drinking-horn of pure gold. In the corner rested, against the wall, a stringed instrument not unlike a dulcimer, which, as people believe, the Giantesses used to play on.

They gazed on what was before them, full of admiration, but without venturing to lay their hands upon anything ; how great and fearful was their amazement when, on turning about, they saw sitting at the table an immense figure, which Orm instantly recognised as the Giant whom Guru had animated by her embrace. He was now a cold and hard stone. While they were standing gazing on it, Guru herself entered the room in her giant form. She wept so bitterly that her tears trickled down on the ground. It was long ere her sobbing permitted her to utter a single word ; at last she spoke :

“ Great affliction have you brought on me, and henceforth I must weep while I live ; yet as I know

that you have not done this with evil intentions, I forgive you, though it were a trifle for me to crush the whole house like an egg-shell over your heads."

"What have we done?" cried Orm and Aslog, filled with the deepest sorrow.

"Alas!" answered she, "my husband, whom I love more than myself, there he sits, petrified for ever; never again will he open his eyes! Three hundred years lived I with my father on the island of Kunnan, happy in the innocence of youth, as the fairest among the Giant maidens. Mighty heroes sued for my hand; the sea around that island is still filled with rocky fragments which they hurled against each other in their combats.

"Andfind won the victory, and I plighted myself to him. But ere I was married came the detestable Odin into the country, who overcame my father, and drove us all from the island. My father and sisters fled to the mountains, and since that time my eyes have beheld them no more.

"Andfind and I saved ourselves on this island, where we for a long time lived in peace and quiet, and thought it would never be interrupted. But destiny, which no one escapes, had determined it otherwise. Oluf came from Britain. They called him the Holy, and Andfind instantly found that his voyage would be unlucky to the Giants. When he

heard how Oluf's ship rushed through the waves, he went down to the strand and blew the sea against him with all his strength.

"The waves swelled up like mountains. But Oluf was still more mighty than he; his ship flew unchecked through the billows like an arrow from a bow. He steered direct for our island. When the ship was so near that Andfind thought he could reach it with his hands, he grasped at the forepart with his right hand, and was about to drag it down to the bottom, as he had often done with other ships.

"But Oluf, the terrible Oluf, stepped forward, and crossing his hands over each other, he cried with a loud voice, 'Stand there as a stone till the last day,' and in the same instant my unhappy husband became a mass of rock. The ship sailed on unimpeded, and ran direct against the mountain, which it cut through, and separated from it the little island which lies out yonder.

"Ever since that day have I passed my life alone and forlorn. On Yule-eve alone can petrified Giants receive back their life for the space of seven hours, if one of their race embraces them, and is at the same time willing to sacrifice a hundred years.

"I loved my husband too well not to bring him back to life every time that I could do it, even at this price, and I have not even counted how often I have

done it, that I might not know the hour when I myself should share his fate, and at the moment when I threw my arms around him become stone like him.

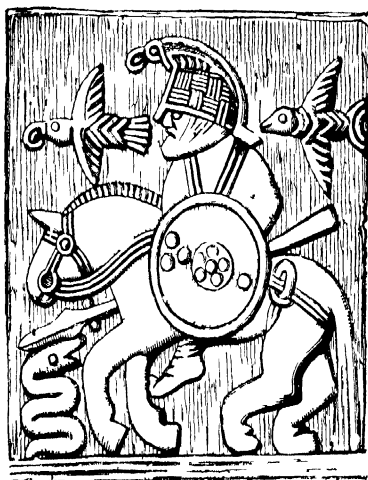
“ But, alas ! even this comfort is taken from me : I can never more by any embrace awake him. He has heard the Name which I dare not utter, and never again will he see the light until the dawn of the last day shall bring it.

“ I now go hence, and you will behold me no more. All that is here in the house I give you ; my dulcimer alone will I keep. But let no one venture to fix his habitation on the small islands that lie around here. There dwell the little underground people whom you saw at the festival, and I will protect them as long as I live ! ”

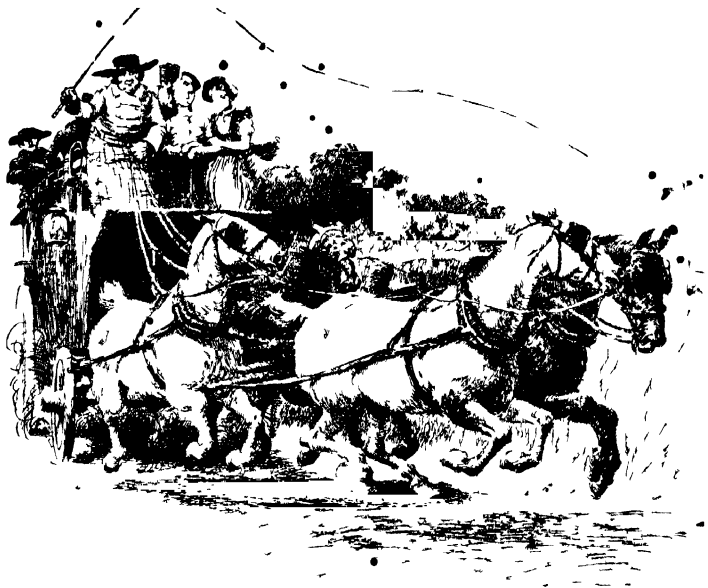
With these words Guru vanished. The next spring Orm took the golden horn and the silver-ware to Drontheim, where no one knew him. The value of these precious metals was so great that he was able to purchase everything requisite for a wealthy man. He loaded his ship with his purchases, and returned to the island, where he spent many years in unalloyed happiness, and Aslog's father was soon reconciled to his wealthy son-in-law.

The huge image remained sitting in the house ; no human power was able to move it. So hard was the stone that hammer and axe flew in pieces without

making the slightest impression upon it. The Giant sat there till a holy man came to the island, who with one single word removed him back to his former station, where he stands to this hour. The copper kettle, which the underground people left behind them, was preserved as a memorial upon the island, which bears the name of House Island to the present day.



Teaching in Summer
and Winter.



"SPRINGING LM"

By
Hugh Thomson.



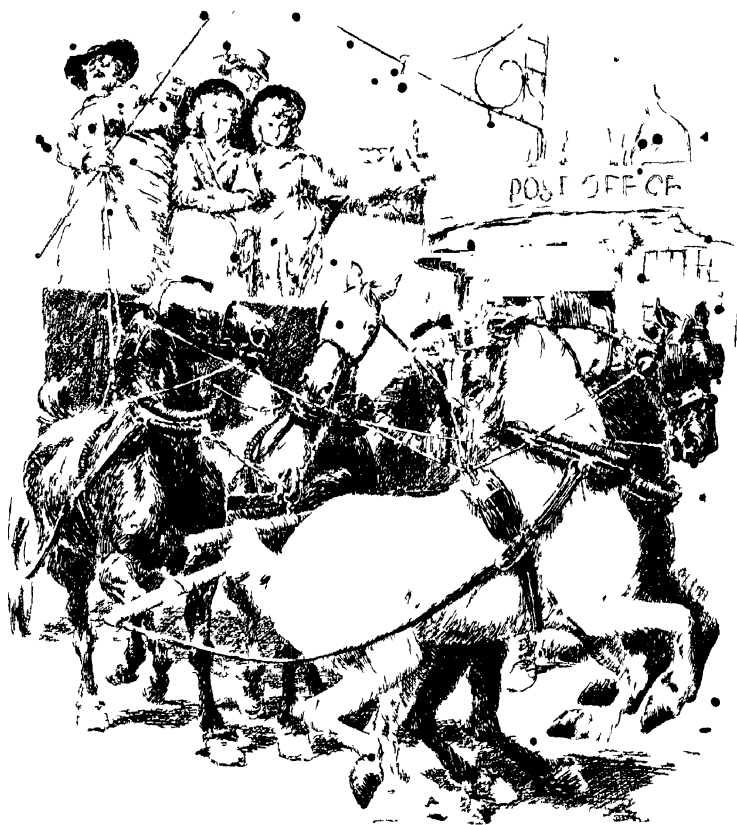
FILLING THE TUB



SEEING THEM OFF.



THE FUNNIX COACH



CALLING FOR THE MAILS



THE END OF THE JOURNLY—SUMMER



THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY—WINTER



DOWNHILL AND UPHILL.



IN A SNOW DRIFT



A WELCOME VISITOR



CHRISTMAS EVE.

Now Christmas is come,
Let us beat up the drum,
And call all our neighbours together ;
And when they appear
Let us make them such cheer
As will keep out the wind and the weather

RAIN IN SUMMER

How beautiful is the rain !
 After the dust and the heat,
 In the broad and fiery street,
 In the narrow lane,
 How beautiful is the rain !
 How it clatters along the roofs,
 Like the tramp of hoofs !
 How it gushes and struggles out
 From the throat of the overflowing spout !
 Across the window-pane
 It pours and pours ;
 And swift and wide,
 With a muddy tide,
 Like a river down the gutter roars
 The rain, the welcome rain !
 The sick man from his chamber looks
 At the twisted brooks ;
 He can feel the cool
 Breath of each little pool ;
 His fevered brain
 Grows calm again,
 And he breathes a blessing on the rain
 From the neighbouring school
 Come the boys,

With more than their wonted noise
And commotion ;
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Engulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain !

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand ;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
With their dilated nostrils spread,
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapours that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil.
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord
More than man's spoken word.

136 . THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees . .
His pastures and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain..
He counts it as no sin,
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.



JOHN HALIFAX. GENTLEMAN

Abel Fletcher was a Quaker and a tanner who lived in a small town called Norton Bury, which stood near "Shakespeare's Avon." One autumn day when he was wheeling his lame son Phineas, a boy of sixteen, in a hand-carriage, they came upon John Halifax, another boy about fourteen years old, standing in an alley where he was taking shelter from a shower of rain.

SCENE I.

Characters

ABEL FLETCHER, the tanner.

PHINEAS FLETCHER, his cripple son.

JOHN HALIFAX, a vagrant boy, tall and strongly built.

JAEI, a servant to Abel Fletcher.

Abel Fletcher (looking at his watch). Twenty-three minutes lost by this shower. Phineas, my son, how am I to get thee safe home? Unless thee wilt go with me to the tanyard?

[*Phineas shakes his head in dissent.*]

Abel Fletcher. Well, well, I must find some one to go home with thee. (*Calling out from the entrance to the alley.*) Here, Sally—Sally Watkins! do any o' thy lads want to earn an honest penny?

138 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

John Halifax. Sir, I want work; may I earn a penny?

Abel Fletcher. What is thy name, lad?

John. John Halifax.

Abel Fletcher. Where dost thee come from?

John. Cornwall.

Abel Fletcher. Hast thee any parents living?

John. No.

Abel Fletcher. How old might thee be, John Halifax?

John. Fourteen, sir.

Abel Fletcher. Thee art used to work?

John. Yes.

Abel Fletcher. What sort of work?

John. Anything that I can get to do.

Abel Fletcher (after a long pause). Well, thee shall take my son home, and I'll give thee a groat. Let me see (*looking sharply at him*), art thee a lad to be trusted? (*Holding him at arm's length.*) I say, art thee a lad to be trusted? (*John looks at him steadfastly, and the old man nods in a satisfied way.*) Lad, shall I give thee thy groat now?

John. Not till I've earned it, sir.

[*The old man slips the money into the hand of his son. Then John Halifax starts down the street, wheeling Phineas in his carriage.*]

Phineas (*sighing*). How strong you are So tall and so strong !

John. Am I ? Well, I shall want my strength.

Phineas. How ?

John. To earn my living.

Phineas. What have you worked at lately ?

John. Anything. I could get, for I have never learned a trade

Phineas. Would you like to learn one ?

John. Once I thought I should like to be what my father was.

Phineas. What was he ?

John. A scholar and a gentleman.

Phineas. Then perhaps you would not like to follow a trade ?

John. Yes, I should. What would it matter to me ? My father was a gentleman.

Phineas. And your mother ?

John. She is dead. I do not like to hear strangers speak about my mother.

Phineas. I beg your pardon ; and I wish that we were not strangers to each other.

John (*with a grateful look*). Do you ?

Phineas. Have you been up and down the country much ?

John. A great deal these last three years ; doing a hand's turn as best I could in hop-picking, apple-

gathering, harvesting—only this summer I had typhus fever and could not work.

Phineas. What did you do then?

John. I lay in a barn till I got well. I'm quite well now; you need not be afraid.

Phineas. No, indeed; I never thought of that. (*After a pause.*) How shall you live in the winter, when there is no outdoor work to be had?

John. I don't know.

Phineas. Ah! Here we are at home!

John. Are you? Good-day, then—which means good-bye.

Phineas. Not good-bye just yet. (*He tries painfully to mount the steps.*)

John. Suppose you let me carry you. I could—and—and it would be great fun, you know. (*Carries Phineas to the front door.*) Now, is there anything more I can do for you, sir?

Phineas. Don't call me "sir." I am only a boy like yourself. I want you; don't go yet. Ah! here comes my father!

Abel Fletcher. So here thee be—hast thee taken care of my son? Did he give thee thy groat, my lad? (*Phineas in dismay whispers to his father, while John turns away.*) Lad—I forget thy name—here is thy groat, and a shilling added for being kind to my son.

John. Thank you, but I don't want payment for kindness.

Abel Fletcher. Eh! thee'rt an odd lad; but I can't stay talking with thee. Come in to dinner, Phineas. • (*Turning to John.*) I say, art thee hungry?

John. Very hungry—nearly starving!

• *Abel Fletcher.* Bless me! Then get in and have thy dinner. But first—thee art a decent lad, come of decent parents?

John (*almost indignantly*). Yes!

Abel Fletcher. Thee works for thy living?

John. • I do, whenever I can get it.

Abel Fletcher. Thee hast never been in jail?

John (*in loud and angry tone*). No! I don't want your dinner, sir. I would have stayed, because your son asked me, and he was civil to me, and I liked him. Now I think I had better go. Good-day, sir.

[*Phineas catches hold of John's hand and holds him.*]

Abel Fletcher (*sharply*). There, get in lads—make no more ado.

[*Abel disappears, while the boys enter the house hand in hand.*]

SCENE II

After dinner, when Mr. Fletcher has left the room, the two boys sit talking for some time while the servant Jael clears the table.

John. Now, how do you feel, and is there anything I can do for you before I go away?

Phineas (earnestly). You'll not go away—not till my father comes home at least.

John (in a rather unsteady voice). Thank you; you are very kind. I'll stay an hour or so, if you wish it.

Phineas. Then come and sit down, and let us have a talk.

John. Can you read?

Phineas. I should rather think so.

John. And write?

Phineas. Oh, yes, certainly.

John. I can't write, and I don't know when I shall be able to learn. I wish you would put down something in a book for me.

Phineas. That I will.

John (taking a Testament from his pocket). Look here.

Phineas (reading from the fly-leaf):

GUY HALIFAX, his Book.

Guy Halifax, gentleman, married Muriel Joyce, May 17, in the year of our Lord, 1779.

John Halifax, their son, born June 18, 1780.

Guy Halifax died January 4, 1781.

What shall I write, John ?

John. Write, "Muriel Halifax died January 1, 1791."

Phineas. Nothing more ?

John. Nothing more. Thank you, Phineas. (*After a pause.*) I've had a merry day—thank you kindly for it ; and now I'll be gone.

Phineas. Why do you want to go ? You have no work.

John. No ; I wish I had. But I'll get some.

Phineas. How ?

John. Just by trying everything that comes to hand. That's the only way. I never wanted bread, nor begged it yet, though I've often been rather hungry. And as for clothes (*looking down disconsolately at his shabby garments*), I'm afraid she would be sorry—that's all ! She always kept me so tidy.

Phineas. Come, cheer up. Who knows what may turn up ?

John. Oh yes, something always does ; I'm not afraid.

Phineas. John, do you know you're uncommonly like a childish hero of mine—Dick Whittington? Did you ever hear of him?

John. No.

Phineas. Come into the garden, then. You'll hear the Abbey bells chime presently—not unlike Bow bells, I used to fancy sometimes; and we'll lie on the grass, and I'll tell you the whole true and particular story of Sir Richard Whittington. (*Taking up his crutches.*) You don't need these things.

John. I hope you will not need them always.

Phineas. Perhaps not; Dr. Jessop isn't sure. But it doesn't matter much; most likely I shan't live long.

John (looking surprised and troubled). I think, if you did not mind, I'm sure I could carry you. I carried a meal-sack once, weighing eight stone.

Phineas (laughing heartily). Please take me to that clematis arbour; it looks over the Avon. Now, how do you like our garden?

John. It's a nice place; it's a very nice place. . . . Have you lived here long?

Phineas. Ever since I was born.

John (somewhat sadly). Ah—well, it's a nice place. This grass plot is very even—thirty yards square, I should guess. I'd get up and pace it, only I'm rather tired.

Phineas. Are you? Yet you would carry- —

John. Oh, that's nothing. I've often walked farther than to-day. But still it's a good step across the country since morning.

Phineas. How far have you come?

John. From the foot of those hills—I forget what they call them—over there. I have seen bigger ones; but they're steep enough—bleak and cold too, especially when one is lying out among the sheep. At a distance they look pleasant. This is a very pretty view. (*The Abbey chimes burst out.*) What's that?

Phineas (*singing*). “Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London.” Probably this garden belonged to the Abbey in ancient times—our orchard is so fine. The monks may have planted it; they liked fruit, those old fellows.

John. Oh, indeed! Do you think they planted that yew hedge?

[*Goes to examine the close-set hedge and tries in vain to force his way through.*]

Phineas. What were you about? Did you want to get through?

John. I wanted just to see if it were possible.

Phineas. What would you do, John, if you were shut up here and had to get over the yew hedge? You could not climb it.

John. I know that, and therefore should not waste time in trying.

Phineas. Would you give up, then?

John (smiling). I'll tell you what I'd do: I'd begin and break it, twig by twig, till I forced my way through and got out safe at the other side.

Abel Fletcher (coming up behind them). Well done, lad! but if it's all the same to thee, I would rather thee did not try that experiment upon my hedge at present. Is that thy usual fashion of getting over a difficulty, friend? What's thy name?

Phineas. It's John Halifax, father.

Abel Fletcher (sitting down). Didn't thee say thee wanted work? It looks rather like it (*glancing at John's shabby clothes*). But thee need'st not be ashamed; better men than thee have been in rags. Hast thee any money?

John. The groat you gave—that is, paid—me. I never take what I don't earn.

Abel Fletcher. Don't be afraid. I was not going to give thee anything except, maybe—— Would thee like some work?

John. Oh, sir!

Phineas. Oh, father!

Abel Fletcher. Well, what canst thee do, lad?

John. Anything.

Abel Fletcher. Anything generally means nothing. What hast thee been at all this year?

John. Let me think a minute, and I'll tell you. All spring I was at a farmer's, riding the plough, horses, hoeing turnips. Then I went up the hills with some sheep. In June I tried hay-making, and caught a fever; you needn't start, sir; I've been well these six weeks, or I wouldn't have come near your son. Then——

Abel Fletcher. That will do, lad; I'm satisfied.

John. Thank you, sir. I shall be willing and thankful for any work you can give me.

Abel Fletcher. We'll see about it. Phineas, one of my men at the tanyard has gone and 'listed this day—left an honest livelihood to be a paid cut-throat. Now, if I could get a lad—one too young to be caught hold of by the recruiting-sergeant—— Dost thee think that this lad is fit to take the place?

Phineas. Whose place, father?

Abel Fletcher. Bill Watkins'.

Phineas. But, father, to do that dirty work——

Abel Fletcher. Thee'rt a fool, and the lad's another. Then he may go about his business.

Phineas. But, father, isn't there anything else?

Abel Fletcher. I have nothing else, or if I had I wouldn't give it. He that will not work, neither shall he eat.

148 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

John. I will work. I don't care what it is, if only it's honest work.

Abel Fletcher. Canst thee drive ?

John. That I can.

Abel Fletcher. It's only a cart, the cart with the skins.

John. Thank you, sir. I'll do it well—that is, as well as I can.

Abel Fletcher. Well, I will take thee, though it isn't often that I take a lad without a recommendation of some sort. I suppose thee hast none ?

John. None.

Abel Fletcher. 'Tis done, then (*shaking John's hand and putting a shilling into it*). This is to show I have hired thee as my servant.

John (hastily). Servant ! Oh, yes, I understand. Well, I will try and serve you well.

[*Abel and John settle the question of wages.*

The tanner goes away, but turns back.

Abel Fletcher. Thee said thee had no money ; there's a week in advance, my son being witness I pay it thee ; and I can pay thee a shilling less every Saturday till we get straight.

John. Very well, sir ; good-afternoon and thank you. (*Throwing his cap high in the air.*) Hurrah !

Dramatised from " John Halifax, Gentleman."



FAIRY MEN

IN Trentham woods we gathered flowers
'Twas growing latish, when—
Tripping between the hyacinth stalks—
I spied the fairy men.
I wish, don't you, that you had been
Standing near me then?

In jackets green and velvet caps,
 With feather in the band—
 Not one of them was half as big
 As Charlie's little hand ;
 I took my bonnet from my head
 And curtseying did stand

To watch them as they tripped along
 The hyacinth-woven bower ;
 Beneath each fairy footfall
 Sprang up a little flower,
 And the mossy grass grew greener,
 As after a Spring shower.

By twos the merry hunting elves
 Marched first to clear the way ;
 They'd lances made of hornet stings,
 And caps with trophies gay ;
 In deadly fight with dragon-flies
 No braver men than they.

Then came the gentle flower-fays,
 Each one an artist pale ;
 Their business is to paint the flowers
 That blossom in the vale ;
 And though they work by dim moonlight,
 Their colours never fail.

Next passed the elves who love to creep

On children's beds at night,

To whisper tales of Fairyland,

When Nurse puts out the light :

Each one carried a folded dream

To spread on a pillow white.

Last the sad stooping cobolds came ;

Through earth-holes small they creep

With patient steps they struggle up

The under-ways so steep :

For sins they are condemned to work

While other fairies sleep.

They carry tiny water-pails

Upon their shoulders small ;

Toilsomely in the under-world

Work they to fill them all,

Catching each raindrop as it drips

Through their dark cavern wall.

All night through fields and lanes they go,

And deftly as they run,

They slip a dewdrop in each flower,

On each grass-blade hang one,

Yet dare not wait to see them turned

To diamonds, by the sun.

152 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

So winding on through Trentham woods
I watched the fairy men ;
The tall ferns hid them from my sight—
I think you called me then.
Could I have dreamt that pleasant scene ?
Or will they come again ?

A. KEARY.

THE APPLES OF IDUNA

JOCK was munching an apple, while Pen was carefully peeling another.

“ Is there an apple story ? ” asked Pen.

“ That’s an easy one,” said Jock. “ You *must* have forgotten your *Wonder-Book*, I think.”

“ Oh yes, I remember,” replied Pen quickly, pausing to throw the apple-peeling over her left shoulder. It fell upon the floor of the porch and made a long curve like a written capital “ I.”

“ That will do,” said the Magician. “ The apple itself is giving us the hint. We must have the story of Iduna, which will be new to you, for you know the *Wonder-Book* tale of the ‘ Golden Apples ’ almost by heart. I will tell it to you as nearly as I can remember it, and then you can look up a book in my study called *The Heroes of Asgard*, to find other



THE APPLES OF IDUNA

From the painting by J. Doyle Pentecost, by permission

THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

tales just as good, and some, indeed, even more entertaining."

"Tell on," said Jock.

I

There was once a wonderful person who told a story that never ended and yet was never wearisome. He was one of the gods of the brave Norsemen who sailed in the Viking ships, and he lived, of course, in the Norsemen's heaven, which was called Asgard.

Now this god of the never-ending story had a wife named Iduna who was more beautiful than any one could tell or even imagine. Why, when she stooped over the water to call her swans to her they would not come because they were unwilling to move over the smooth surface of the stream and spoil the pretty picture which was made by the reflection of the goddess; so she must have been very beautiful indeed!

She lived in a pretty grove in which everything, including herself, was young and fresh and lovely. The birds were always of this year's hatching, and never grew any older; the deer were pretty fawns, the trees had just left off being saplings, and the flowers were newly opened to the sun. It is not wonderful that the place was known among the

gods and heroes of Asgard by a name which signified "Always Young."

Now, Iduna had a casket of gold which contained nothing but apples; and when the gods came to visit her, like a true hostess she would open this casket and ask them very prettily to take an apple. Her proffered gift was never refused. An apple is a pleasant gift in itself, but such fruit as Iduna kept within that casket had never been seen or heard of before; and I am sure it has never been seen since her time.

A hero might come tired and weary to Iduna's grove, thinking that at last he must surely be growing old—a thing which he feared even more than one of the Giants of Giant Land. But as soon as he had eaten one of Iduna's apples he felt fresh and young and vigorous once again, ready and willing to fight the Giants one and all.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Iduna's grove was never lonely. I think if we could find out the way to it some of us would set out to visit the beautiful goddess at once.

You may, very reasonably, ask where Iduna obtained her supplies of these wonderful apples. As a matter of fact, she had absolutely no trouble about that part of her housekeeping, for, as soon as she took one apple from the golden casket, another fell in.

Where it came from she did not know, and she was so used to being kept supplied in this wonderful way that she did not think anything about it; it was like the sunrise, no longer wonderful because it happened every day.

II

Now you must know and remember that the god named Loki was the inventor of all lies and craft and mischief. Why Odin, the father of the gods, allowed him to go on living will always be a mystery to me. But, at all events, there he was, and likely to stay. You must keep this Loki in mind, for it was owing to his love of mischief that all the trouble arose, though at the same time, to be sure, there would have been no story without him.

One day Iduna's husband set out with Father Odin, Loki, and another of the gods, "in search of adventure," as they said, which always meant that they went in the direction of Giant Land to see if any of its huge inhabitants could be induced to come out and try their mettle. You must acknowledge that it was really very brave of them when you consider what the Giants were like with regard to size and general furiousness.

What they actually did is really no part of this story, though it makes a pretty story in itself. But

the result of their adventure is important, for Loki got into trouble, as usual, was carried off by one of the Giants in the form of an eagle, and was only set free on promising that he would at the earliest possible moment deliver up Iduna and her casket to the dwellers in Giant Land; for the monsters wanted those apples very badly.

Meanwhile, Iduna was feeling unaccountably sad. Of course, she was left all alone, and one might expect her to be somewhat pensive because of that. But there was more behind her sadness. She felt a foreboding of something evil.

Wandering slowly by the stream, she came to a place where the river was shaded by low bushes on each side and reflected clearly the blue sky overhead. As she looked into the crystal mirror, she suddenly saw a terrible sight—the reflection of a winged monster with large dark wings, pointed claws, and the fiercest eyes seen in the head of a bird or beast.

Iduna looked up and saw the monster itself, and as she looked it rose slowly into the air. Higher and higher it ascended, and as it did so it shook its wings and a number of black feathers fell to the earth—at all events they seemed to Iduna to be black feathers, until one fell upon her dress, when she saw that it was really a black insect with wings of its own.

It crept within the folds of her robe and settled there near her heart, and it is no wonder that she felt unhappy, for this little black insect was really a Nervous Fear, the first to be seen in Iduna's grove.

III

When Loki returned to Asgard he made haste to visit Iduna in her grove. He found her seated by the fountain, lost in pleasant thoughts, and when she received him kindly, he asked for one of her apples to refresh him after the fatigues of his journey—so at least he said.

But he meant otherwise, for he had no sooner received the apple than he told Iduna, very ungraciously, that it was small and withered, and that he knew of a tree in a grove not far from Asgard on which grew apples much finer than those from the casket before him.

At first Iduna was indignant, but Loki disregarded her anger and craftily described the beauty of the new fruit in such a way that the goddess was filled with curiosity to see it. Seeing his advantage, Loki used all his powers of persuasion, and at last induced Iduna to leave the grove, carrying her precious casket with her, in spite of her husband's strict orders to remain always where she was. "It is only a little way," she said to herself, "there can

be no harm in going just this once." This is a very old excuse, and has been made by many others besides Iduna.

It is true that she paused at the gate—she deserves credit for that—but Loki took her by the hand and she passed out into the dark shadows where the night wind wrapped her round with a cold embrace, chilling her to the very heart. . .

As they sped onward she looked upward and saw hovering above her the dreadful monster whose reflection she had seen in the clear waters of the river. Terror-struck she gazed while the dark wings and dreadful talons drew nearer and nearer till at last she was seized and lifted high into the air and carried away to Giant Land.

IV

Of course, when the supply of such wonderful apples as those of Iduna's casket suddenly failed completely, the gods and goddesses had to face that which they feared even more than they feared the Giants—the necessity of growing old.

As the days passed by, each noticed a strange change coming gradually over the faces and figures of all the others. Wrinkles appeared upon their foreheads and at the corners of their eyes; their cheeks lost the soft rosy roundness which the apples

must once have given them ; their knees grew weaker and their shoulders stooped when they walked. Silver threads appeared among the golden or raven tresses of the goddesses, and the heroes began to make mistakes when they looked at things.

Every one became strangely sad too, and Loki was as sad as all the others ; for what *was* the use of being gods and goddesses if they had to grow old like ordinary mortals ? What, indeed ? And when, at last, each one knew that the change was not only taking place in the others, but in himself (or herself) as well, the sadness could not well have been deeper.

Then Loki's daughter, the Queen of the Dead, came to Asgard, and this roused Odin as nothing else had done since Iduna had been carried off.

"How dare you leave your own place, the land of Ghosts and Shades ? " he asked in anger.

"White hair, wrinkled faces, weary limbs, dull eyes, sunken cheeks," she said in a voice which seemed to be made of the East Wind, "these are the things which call me hither, for they show that in time even the gods and goddesses of Asgard will be my guests and subjects."

Then up sprang Iduna's husband. "It is plain," he said, "that unless Iduna returns, we are lost for ever. I will go with Balder the White God to enquire about her from the Fates who know all

things." And he lost no time in doing so, though, when he obtained the answer he desired, Odin alone could interpret it; and it declared, justly enough to be sure, that only Loki could bring Iduna back, and that he must go in search of her, clothed in the falcon feathers which formed the garment of Freya, the goddess of beauty.

So, with the falcon wings fastened to his shoulders, Loki started at full flight for Giant Land, where Iduna had been imprisoned in a dungeon formed by the deep dark hollow of a rock with a window looking out upon the sea. There she was to remain until she gave the apples of her own free will to the Giant who had carried her off from Asgard. For he could not take them by himself. When he tried to do so the fruit slipped from beneath his fingers, shrank to the size of a pea, and hid itself in corners of the casket where his huge fingers could not grasp it.

One morning Iduna stood at her open window looking sadly out across the sea, when a huge bird alighted on the window-ledge and looked steadily at her in a way that made it quite unnecessary for him to use words in order to make his meaning clear.

In a moment, while she looked at Loki, for of course it was he, she was changed into a sparrow; and when Loki flew away she sped after him like

162 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

an arrow from a bow. But the sea-birds wheeling round the rock raised an alarm, and before long the Giant had donned his eagle wings and was in hot pursuit.

For five days and nights they flew in the direction of Asgard, and with fear at their hearts the gods and goddesses watched them from the ramparts. Would that tiny sparrow win the race and bring them back the gift of everlasting youth?

As a guide to the little bird Odin ordered fires to be lighted on the ramparts all round the city so that the place was ringed with flame. Iduna was very weary when she reached that burning circle, but had strength enough to rise above the flames and smoke, to fall at length upon the lowest step of Odin's throne. Not so the Giant; for *he* fell into the fire and was burnt to death.

Loki was saved too, I suppose, for after that time there was still a considerable amount of mischief in the world; but, as I have said, there would have been no story without him, for if the casket had not been lost it could never have been found.



LANDAIS PEASANTS GOING TO MARKET.

From an engraving after Rosa Bonheur, by permission of Messrs L. H. Lefèvre & Son.

THE FAITHFUL BIRD

THE greenhouse is my summer seat ;
 My shrubs, displaced from that retreat,
 Enjoy'd the open air ;
 Two goldfinches whose sprightly song
 Had been their mutual solace long,
 Lived happy prisoners there.

They sang as blithe as finches sing
 That flutter leose on golden wing,
 And frolic where they list ;
 Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,
 But that delight they never knew,
 And therefore never miss'd.

But nature works in every breast,
 With force not easily suppress'd ;
 And Dick felt some desires
 That, after many an effort vain,
 Instructed him at length to gain
 A pass between the wires.

The open windows seem'd to invite
 The frëeman to a farewell flight ;
 But Tom was still confin'd ;

And Diok, although his way was clear,
 Was much too generous and sincere
 To leave his friend behind.

So, settling on his cage, by play,
 And chirp, and kiss, he seem'd to say,
 You must not live alone—
 Nor would he quit that chosen stand,
 Till I, with slow and cautious hand,
 Return'd him to his own.

W. COWPER.

SIGNS OF FOUL WEATHER

THE hollow winds begin to blow ;
 The clouds look black, the glass is low ;
 The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep ;
 And spiders from their cobwebs peep.
 Last night the sun went pale to bed ;
 The moon in halos hid her head.
 The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
 For, see, a rainbow spans the sky.
 The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
 Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel.
 Hark ! how the chairs and tables crack
 Old Betty's joints are on the rack :



Her corns with shooting pains torment her,
 And to her bed untimely sent her.
 Loud quack the ducks, the sea-fowl cry,
 'The distant hills are looking high.
 How restless are the snorting swine !

The busy flies disturb the kine.
Low on the grass the swallow wings,
The cricket, too, how sharp he sings !
Puss on the hearth, with velvet paws,
Sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws,
The smoke from chimneys right ascends;
Then, spreading back to earth, it bends.
The wind unsteady veers around,
Or settling in the south is found.
Through the clear stream the fishes rise,
And nimbly catch the incautious flies.
The glow-worms num'rous, clear and bright,
Illum'd the dewy hill last night.
At dusk the squalid toad was seen,
Like quadruped, stalk o'er the green.
The whirling wind the dust obeys,
And in the rapid eddy plays.
The frog has changed his yellow vest,
And in a russet coat is drest.
The sky is green, the air is still,
The mellow blackbird's voice is shrill.
The dog, so altered in his taste,
Quits mutton-bones on grass to feast ;
Behold the rooks, how odd their flight
They imitate the gliding kite,
And seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing ball.

168 THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

The tender colts on back do lie, °
Nor heed the traveller passing by.
In fiery red the sun doth rise, °
Then wades through clouds to mount the skies.

'Twill surely rain, we see't with sorrow,
No working in the fields to-morrow.

DR JENNER.





THE TAR FOR ALL WEATHERS

I SAIL'D from the Downs in the *Nancy*,
 My jib how she smack'd through the breeze !
 She's a vessel as tight to my fancy
 As ever sail'd on the salt seas.
 So adieu to the white cliffs of Britain,
 Our girls and our dear native shore !
 For if some hard rock we should split on,
 We shall never see them any more.

But sailors were born for all weathers,
 Great guns let it blow, high or low,
 Our duty keeps us to our tethers,
 And where the gale drives we must go.

When we entered the Straits of Gibraltar
 I verily thought she'd have sunk,
 For the wind began so for to alter,
 She yaw'd just as tho' she was drunk.
 The squall tore the mainsail to shivers,
 Helm a-weather, the hoarse boatswain cries ;
 Brace the foresail athwart, see she quivers,
 As through the rough tempest she flies.
 But sailors were born for all weathers,
 Great guns let it blow, high or low,
 Our duty keeps us to our tethers,
 And where the gale drives we must go.

The storm came on thicker and faster,
 As black just as pitch was the sky,
 When truly a doleful disaster

Befel three poor sailors and I.

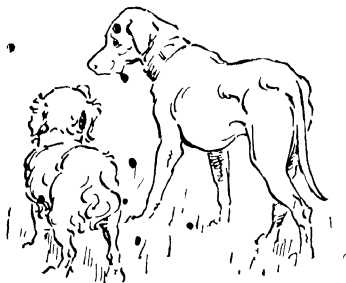
Ben Buntline, Sam Shroud, and Dick Handsail,

By a blast that came furious and hard,
 Just while we were furling the mainsail,
 Were every scul swept from the yard.

But sailors were born for all weathers,
Great guns let it blow, high or low,
Our duty keeps us to our tethers,
And where the gale drives we must go!

Poor Ben, Sam, and Dick cried *peccavi*,
As for I, at the risk of my neck,
While they sank down in peace to old Davy,
Caught a rope, and so landed on deck.
Well, what would you have? We were stranded,
And out of a fine jolly crew
Of three hundred that sail'd, never landed
But I and, I think, twenty-two.
But sailors were born for all weathers,
Great guns let it blow, high or low,
Our duty keeps us to our tethers,
And where the gale drives we must go.

• C. DIBDIN.





A WANDERING KING

PART I

WE had just returned from a glorious holiday in the south of Scotland where we had lived for two months in a house at Melrose, not far from Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott.

One day we went for a motor trip up the lovely valley of the Tweed. Jock liked the swift motion, the engine, the levers, the speedometer, and the chauffeur, while Pen loved the roadside cottages,



PTN LOVED THE ROAD-SIDE COTTAGES

the hens and ducks, the pretty rivers and overhanging trees, the scarlet berries on the rowans, and the sheep far away up the hills.

For a time we had been running very quickly, but suddenly the car began to slow down, and after a short time came to a dead stop. The chauffeur was looking up a bleak hillside on which no grass was growing, and which resembled nothing so much as a huge pit-heap.

"Look about half way up the hill," said the man, who seemed to know a great deal, "and you will see a hole in the side of it. That is the entrance to a cave, and people say that Bruce or Wallace once hid in it. I do not know which it was nor does it greatly matter, but see what a splendid refuge the place would make for a hunted man. There is no path to the entrance. Any one coming up the hill or over the brow of it from the other side would be easily heard, for at every step he would send the loose slaty rock tumbling down the slope; and if twenty men came near the opening of the cave they could not do much harm to the man who held it.

"Of course he could only stay there until his food supply gave out, but as a hiding-place I think this cave would be bad to beat."

Jock's eyes were shining now as brightly as when



"A BLEAK HILLSIDE ON WHICH NO GRASS WAS GROWING."

the chauffeur had taken the "bonnet" off and had shown him the engine. "How splendid!" he said "I wish we could go up there and explore."

"It would be a heavy climb, and there would not be much to see when we got there," said the driver as he started the engine again. "But I thought you would like to see the place."

"Thank you very much," said Pen, in her pretty way. "It is frightfully fascinating." Of course the chauffeur did not know that she was using Wendy's words, and he looked rather surprised.

Now the result of all this was that when we got home once more we felt that we simply *must* read something about Bruce. So we got Sir Walter Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, and read these stories over again. Of course you must remember that Bruce had been crowned King of Scotland, but had been driven from his throne by the English King Edward, who wished to be King of Scotland also.

Driven from one place in the Highlands to another, starved out of some districts, and forced from others by the opposition of the inhabitants, Bruce attempted to force his way into Lorn, but he found enemies everywhere.

• The M'Dougals, a powerful family, then called Lords of Lorn, were friendly to the English, and, putting their men in arms, attacked and defeated Bruce and his wandering companions as soon as they attempted to enter their territory, but he showed, amidst his misfortunes, the greatness of his strength and courage. • • •

• He directed his men to retreat through a narrow pass, and, placing himself last of the party, he fought with and slew such of the enemy as attempted to press hard on them. : •

Three followers of M'Dougal, a father and two sons called M'Androsser, all very strong men, when they saw Bruce thus protecting the retreat of his followers, made a vow that they would either kill this champion or make him prisoner.

The whole three rushed on the King at once. Bruce was on horseback, in the strait pass we have described, betwixt a steep rock and a deep lake. He struck the first man who came up and seized his horse's rein such a blow with his sword as cut off his hand and freed the bridle. The man bled to death. •

The other brother had grasped Bruce in the meantime by the leg, and was attempting to throw him from horseback. The King, setting spurs to his horse, made the animal suddenly spring forward,

178. THE PROGRESS TO LITERATURE

so that the Highlander fell under his feet ; and as he was endeavouring to rise again Bruce cleft his head in two with his sword.

The father, seeing his two sons thus slain, flew desperately at the King, and grasped him by the mantle so close to his body that he could not have room to wield his long sword. But with the heavy pommel of that weapon, or, as others say, with an iron hammer which hung at his saddle-bow, the King struck this third assailant so dreadful a blow that he dashed out his brains.

Still, however, the Highlander kept his dying grasp on the King's mantle, so that, to be free of the dead body, Bruce was obliged to undo the brooch or clasp by which it was fastened, and leave that and the mantle itself behind him. The brooch, which fell thus into the possession of M'Dougal of Lorn, is still preserved in that ancient family as a memorial that the celebrated Robert Bruce once narrowly escaped falling into the hands of their ancestor.

II

The King met with many such encounters amidst his dangerous and dismal wanderings ; yet, though almost always defeated by the superior numbers of the English, and of such Scots as sided with them,

He still kept up his own spirits and those of his followers.

He was a better scholar than was usual in those days, when, except clergymen, few people learned to read and write. But King Robert could do both very well, and we are told that he sometimes read aloud to his companions to amuse them when they were crossing the great Highland lakes in such wretched leaky boats as they could find for that purpose.

At last dangers increased so much around the brave King Robert that he was obliged to separate himself from his Queen and her ladies, for the winter was coming on, and it would be impossible for the women to endure this wandering sort of life when the frost and snow should set in.

So Bruce left his Queen, with the Countess of Buchan and others, in the only castle which remained to him, which was called Kildrummie, and is situated near the head of the river Don, in Aberdeenshire. The King also left his youngest brother, Nigel Bruce, to defend the castle against the English, and he himself, with his second brother Edward, who was a very brave man, went over to an island called Rachrin, on the coast of Ireland, where he passed the winter of 1306.

In the meantime ill-luck seemed to pursue all his friends in Scotland. The castle of Kildrummie

was taken by the English, and Nigel Bruce, a beautiful and brave youth, was cruelly put to death by the victors. The ladies who had attended on Robert's Queen, as well as the Queen herself and the Countess of Buchan, were thrown into prison and treated with the utmost severity.

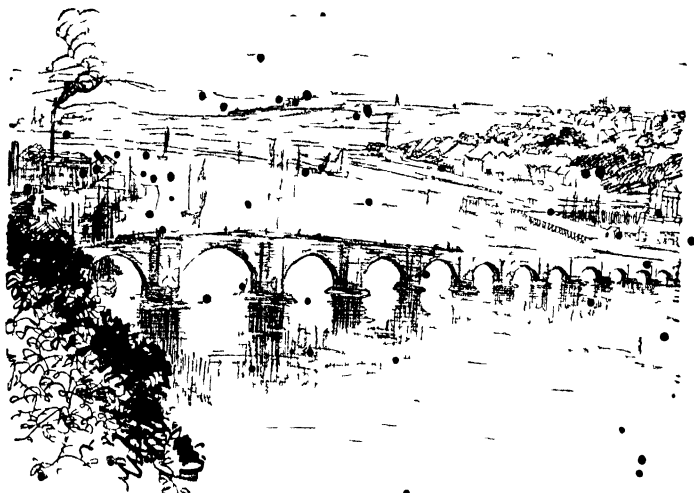
The Countess of Buchan, as I told you before, had given Edward great offence by being the person who placed the crown on the head of Robert Bruce. She was imprisoned within the castle of Berwick, in a cage made on purpose. Some Scottish authors have pretended that this cage was hung over the walls with the poor countess, like a parrot's cage out at a window. But this is their own ignorant idea.

The cage of the Lady Buchan was a strong wooden and iron piece of framework placed within an apartment, and resembling one of those places in which wild beasts are confined.

The news of the taking of Kildrummie, the captivity of his wife, and the execution of his brother reached Bruce while he was residing in a miserable dwelling at Rachrin, and reduced him to the point of despair.

III

After receiving the last unpleasant intelligence from Scotland, Bruce was lying one morning on his



THE OLD BRIDGE AT BERWICK

wretched bed and deliberating with himself whether he had not better resign all thoughts of again attempting to make good his right to the Scottish crown, and, dismissing his followers, transport himself and his brothers to the Holy Land, and spend the rest of his life in fighting against the Saracens.

While he was divided betwixt these reflections, and doubtful of what he should do, Bruce was looking upward to the roof of the cabin in which he lay, and his eye was attracted by a spider, which, hanging at the end of a long thread of its own spinning, was trying to swing itself from one beam in the roof to another for the purpose of fixing the line on which it meant to stretch its web.

The insect made the attempt again and again without success ; at length Bruce counted that it had tried to carry its point six times, and been as often unable to do so. It came into his head that he had himself fought just six battles against the English, and that the poor persevering spider was exactly in the same situation with himself, having made as many trials and been as often disappointed in what it aimed at.

“Now,” thought Bruce, “as I have no means of knowing what is best to be done, I will be guided by the luck which shall attend this spider. If the insect shall make another effort to fix its thread, and shall be successful, I will venture a seventh time to try my fortune in Scotland, but if the spider shall fail, I will go to the wars in Palestine, and never return to my country more.”

While Bruce was forming this resolution the spider made another exertion with all the force it could muster, and fairly succeeded in fastening its thread to the beam which it had so often in vain attempted to reach.

Bruce, seeing the success of the spider, resolved to try his own fortune ; and as he had never before gained a victory, so he never afterwards sustained any considerable check or defeat. I have often met with people of the name of Bruce, so completely

• persuaded of the truth of this story that they would not on any account kill a spider, because it was that insect, which had shown the example of perseverance and given a signal of good luck to their great namesake.

IV

• Bruce now removed himself and his followers from Rachrin to the island of Arran, which lies in the mouth of the Clyde. The King landed and inquired of the first woman he met what armed men were in the island. She returned for answer that there had arrived there very lately a body of armed strangers, who had defeated an English officer, the governor of the castle, had killed him and most of his men, and were now amusing themselves with hunting about the island.

• • The King, having caused himself to be guided to the woods which these strangers most frequented, there blew his horn repeatedly. Now the chief of the strangers who had taken the castle was James Douglas, whom we have already mentioned as one of the best of Bruce's friends, and he was accompanied by some of the bravest of that patriotic band.

When he heard Robert Bruce's horn he knew the sound well, and cried out that yonder was the King—

he knew by his manner of blowing. So he and his companions hastened to meet King Robert, and there was great joy on both sides, whilst at the same time they could not help weeping when they considered their own forlorn condition, and the great loss that had taken place among their friends since they had last parted.

But they were stout-hearted men, and looked forward to freeing their country in spite of all that had yet happened.

Bruce now, on his part, opened a communication with the opposite coast of Carrick by means of one of his followers called Cuthbert. This person had directions that if he should find the countrymen in Carrick disposed to take up arms against the English he was to make a fire on a headland, or lofty cape, called Turnberry, on the coast opposite to the island of Atran.

The appearance of a fire on this place was to be the signal for Bruce to put to sea with such men as he had, who were not more than three hundred in number, for the purpose of landing in Carrick.

Bruce and his men watched eagerly for the signal, but for some time in vain. At length a fire on Turnberry Head became visible, and the king and his followers merrily betook themselves to their

ships and galleys. They landed on the beach at midnight, where they found their spy Cuthbert alone, waiting for them with very bad news. Lord Percy, he said, was in the country with two or three hundred Englishmen, and had terrified the people so much that none of them dared to think of rebelling against King Edward.

"Traitor!" said Bruce, "why, then, did you make the signal?"

"Alas," replied Cuthbert, "the fire was not made by me, but by some other person, for what purpose I know not, but as soon as I saw it burning I knew that you would come over, thinking it my signal, and therefore I came down to wait for you on the beach, to tell you how the matter stood."

King Robert's first idea was to return to Arran, but his brother Edward refused to go back. "I will not leave my native land," he said, "now that I am restored to it. I will give freedom to Scotland, or leave my body on the surface of the land which gave me birth."

Bruce also, after some hesitation, determined that since he had been thus brought to the mainland of Scotland, he would remain there and take such adventure and fortune as Heaven should send. But being left with small attendance, or sometimes almost alone, he ran great risk of losing his life by

treachery or by open violence. Several of these incidents are very interesting. I will tell you some of them.

At one time a near relation of Bruce's was induced by the bribes of the English to attempt to put him to death. This villain, with his two sons, watched the King one morning till he saw him separated from all his men, excepting a little boy who waited on him as a page.

The father had a sword in his hand, one of the sons had a sword and a spear, and the other had a sword and a battle-axe.

Now, when the King saw them so well armed, when there were no enemies near, he began to call to mind some hints which had been given to him that these men intended to murder him. He had no weapons excepting his sword, but his page had a bow and arrow. He took them both from the little boy, and bade him stand at a distance, "for," said the King, "if I overcome these traitors thou shalt have enough of weapons, but if I am slain by them you may make your escape, and tell Douglas and my brother to avenge my death." The boy was very sorry, for he loved his master: but he was obliged to do as he was bidden.

In the meantime the traitors came forward upon Bruce, that they might assault him at once. The King called out to them, and commanded them to come no nearer, upon peril of their lives, but the father answered with flattering words, pretending great kindness, and still continuing to approach his person.

Then the King again called to them to stand. "Traitors," said he, "ye have sold my life for English gold, but you shall die if you come one foot nearer to me." With that he bent the page's bow, and as the old man continued to advance, he let the arrow fly at him.

Bruce was an excellent archer; he aimed his arrow so well that it hit the father in the eye and penetrated into his brain, so that he fell down dead. Then the two sons rushed on the King. One of them fetched a blow at him with an axe, but missed his stroke and stumbled, so that the King with his great sword cut him down before he could recover his feet.

The remaining traitor ran on Bruce with his spear, but the King, with a sweep of his sword, cut the steel head off the villain's weapon and then killed him before he had time to draw his sword. Then the little page came running back, very joyful of his master's victory.

VI

Bruce now betook himself to Galloway, and it soon became known to the people there that he was in their country having no more than sixty men with him ; so they resolved to attack him by surprise, and for this purpose they got two hundred men together and brought with them two or three bloodhounds.

These animals were trained to chase a man by the scent of his footsteps, as foxhounds chase a fox or as beagles and harriers chase a hare. Although the dog does not see the person whose trace he is put upon, he follows him over every step he has taken.

The good King Robert had received some information of the intention of this party to come upon him suddenly and by night. Accordingly he quartered his little troop of sixty men on the side of a deep and swift-running river that had very steep and rocky banks.

There was but one ford by which this river could be crossed in that neighbourhood, and that ford was deep and narrow, so that two men could scarcely get through abreast ; the ground on which they were to land on the side where the King stood was steep, and the path which led upwards from the water's edge to the top of the bank extremely narrow and difficult.

Bruce caused his men to lie down to take some sleep at a place about half a mile distant from the river, while he himself, with two men, went down to watch the ford, through which the enemy must needs pass before they could come to the place where King Robert's men were lying.

He stood for some time looking at the ford and thinking how easily the enemy might be kept from passing there, provided it was bravely defended, when he heard at a distance the baying of a hound, which was always coming nearer and nearer.

This was the bloodhound which was tracing the King's steps to the ford where he had crossed, and the two hundred Galloway men were along with the animal and guided by it.

Bruce at first thought of going back to awaken his men, but then he reflected that it might be only some shepherd's dog. "My men," he said to himself, "are sorely tired; I will not disturb their sleep for the yelping of a cur, till I know something more of the matter."

So he stood and listened, and by and by, as the cry of the hound came nearer, he began to hear a trampling of horses and the voices of men and the ringing and clattering of armour, and then he was sure the enemy were coming to the riverside.

Then the King thought, "If I go back to give my

men the alarm, these Galloway men will get through the ford, and that would be a pity, since it is such a good place to make defence against them." So he looked again at the steep path and the deep river, and he thought that they gave him so much advantage that he himself could defend the passage with his own hand until his men came to assist him.

His armour was so good and strong that he had no fear of arrows, and therefore the combat was not so very unequal as it must otherwise have been. He therefore sent his followers to waken his men, and remained alone by the bank of the river.

In the meanwhile the noise and trampling of the horses increased, and the moon being bright, Bruce beheld the glancing arms of about two hundred men, who came down to the opposite bank of the river.

The men of Galloway, on their part, saw but one solitary figure guarding the ford, and the foremost of them plunged into the river without minding him. But as they could only pass the ford one by one, the Bruce, who stood high above them on the bank where they were to land, killed the foremost man with a thrust of his long spear, and with a second thrust stabbed the horse, which fell down on the narrow path, and so prevented the others who were following from getting out of the river.

Bruce had thus an opportunity of dealing his

blows at pleasure among them, while they could not strike at him again. In the confusion five or six of the enemy were slain, or, having been borne down the current, were drowned in the river. The rest were terrified and drew back.

But when the Galloway men looked again and saw they were opposed by only one man, they themselves being so many, they cried out that their honour would be lost for ever if they did not force their way, and encouraged each other with loud cries to plunge through and assault him. But by this time the King's soldiers came up to his assistance, and the Galloway men retreated and gave up their enterprise.

DECEMBER COLOUR

RED, blood-red, with an orange rim,
 • Flushing the toadstool-tops ;
 • Bronze of bracken where blue mists dim
 • Depths of the chestnut copse ;
 Bramble lit to a burning bush,
 • Winter's torch, to light her ;
 • Over the cottage the creeper's blush,
 Bright, and ever brighter.



WHO SAID 'TALK DECEMBER'?

Silver of rain, on the emerald moss,
 Flame on the robin's breast;
 Opal and amethyst clouds that cross,
 Gold of the warming west;
 Pearls of mistletoe (Santa Claus
 Soon shall his rites remember!),
 Rubies rained from the hips and haws—
 Who said "Pale December"?

S. GERTRUDE FORD.

THE LAST DAY OF FLOWERS

BROTHER, before we go to bed,
 Let's run to the meadow-gate
 And pull a bunch of cuckoo-flowers!
 To-morrow 'twill be too late;
 For John says he must mow the grass
 Before the sun is high.
 I wonder do the flowers know
 That to-morrow they must die!

All day to-morrow you and John
 Will toss out in the sun
 Dead flowers and faded grass together:
 You'll only think of the fun,

¹ From the *Westminster Gazette* with acknowledgments.

But I shall feel a little sad,
 For you know I always say
 That the glory of the year is gone
 When the flowers are cut away.

When all the pleasant meadow-lands
 Are bare, and still, and green,
 They never look so bright to me
 As in the spring they've been :
 I like to see the meadow-sweet
 In the wind move to and fro—
 Purples growing high in the grass,
 Red pimpernels below.

Brightly the stitchwort star-flowers shine ;
 Yet surely, if I were near,
 In every flower's heart I should find
 Hidden a glittering tear :
 And, see the poppies near the hedge !
 Each slowly bends its head.
 Can they be telling one another,
 " To-morrow you'll be dead ? "

I shall not join the hay-making,
 Or play i' the hay with you,
 I am so sorry for the flowers
 We've loved the summer through :

I'm glad the sun shone out so warm,
That sweetly passed the hours,
And that the air was bright and still
On the last day of flowers.

A. KEARY.

A WANDERING KING

PART II

I

ONE day, in the midst of a forest, Bruce and his foster-brother met with three men who looked like thieves or ruffians. They were well armed, and one of them bore a sheep on his back, which it seemed as if they had just stolen.

They saluted the King civilly, and he, replying to their salutation, asked them where they were going. The men answered that they were seeking for Robert Bruce, for that they intended to join with him. The King answered that if they would go with him he would conduct them where they would find the Scottish King.

Then the man who had spoken changed countenance, and Bruce, who looked sharply at him, began to suspect that the ruffian guessed who he was, and that he and his companions had some design.

against his person, in order to gain the reward which had been offered for his life.

So he said to them, "My good friends, as we are not well acquainted with each other, you must go before us and we will follow near to you."

"You have no occasion to suspect any harm from us," answered the man.

"Neither do I suspect any," said Bruce, "but this is the way in which I choose to travel."

The men did as he commanded, and thus they travelled till they came together to a waste and ruinous cottage, where the men proposed to dress some part of the sheep which their companion was carrying. The King was glad to hear of food, but he insisted that there should be two fires kindled, one for himself and his foster-brother at one end of the house, the other at the other end for their three companions.

The men did as he desired. They broiled a quarter of mutton for themselves, and gave another to the King and his attendant. They were obliged to eat it without bread or salt, but as they were very hungry they were glad to get food in any shape, and partook of it very heartily.

Then so heavy a drowsiness fell on King Robert that, for all the danger he was in, he could not resist an inclination to sleep. But first he desired his

foster-brother to watch while he slept, for he had great suspicion of their new acquaintances.

His foster-brother promised to remain awake, and did his best to keep his word. But the King had not been long asleep ere his foster-brother fell into a deep slumber also, for he had undergone as much fatigue as the King.

When the three villains saw the King and his attendant asleep, they made signs to each other, and rising up at once, drew their swords with the purpose of killing them both.

But the King slept lightly, and for as little noise as the traitors made in rising, he was awakened by it, and starting up, drew his sword and went to meet them. At the same moment he pushed his foster-brother with his foot to awaken him, and he too got on his feet, but ere he got his eyes cleared to see what was about to happen, one of the ruffians that were advancing to slay the King killed him with a stroke of his sword.

The King was now alone, one man against three, and in the greatest danger of his life, but his amazing strength and the good armour which he wore freed him once more from this great peril, and he killed the three men, one after another. He then left the cottage, very sorrowful for the death of his faithful foster-brother, and took his direction towards

the place where he had appointed his men to meet him.

II

It was now near night, and the place of meeting being a farmhouse, he went boldly into it, where he found the mistress, an old true-hearted Scots-woman, sitting alone. Upon seeing a stranger enter, she asked him who and what he was. The King answered that he was a traveller who was journeying through the country:

“All travellers,” answered the good woman, “are welcome here for the sake of one.”

“And who is that one,” said the King, “for whose sake you make all travellers welcome?”

“It is our rightful King, Robert the Bruce,” answered the mistress, “who is the lawful lord of this country, and although he is now pursued and hunted after with hounds and horns, I hope to live to see him King over all Scotland.”

“Since you love him so well, dame,” said the King, “know that you see him before you. I am Robert the Bruce.”

“You!” said the good woman in great surprise; “and wherefore are you thus alone?—where are all your men?”



"SINCE YOU LOVE HIM SO WELL DAMP SAID THE KING, 'KNOW
THAT YOU SEE HIM BEFORE YOU

"I have none with me at this moment," answered Bruce, "and therefore I must travel alone."

"But that shall not be," said the brave old dame, "for I have two stout sons, gallant and trusty men, who shall be your servants for life and death."

So she brought her two sons, and though she well knew the dangers to which she exposed them, she made them swear fidelity to the King, and they afterwards became high officers in his service.

Now the loyal old woman was getting everything ready for the King's supper, when suddenly there was a great trampling of horses heard round the house. They thought it must be some of the English, and the good wife called upon her sons to fight to the last for King Robert. But shortly after they heard the voice of the good Lord James of Douglas and of Edward Bruce, the King's brother, who had come with a hundred and fifty horsemen to this farmhouse.

Robert the Bruce was right joyful to meet his brother and his faithful friend Lord James, and had no sooner found himself once more at the head of such a considerable body of followers than he began to inquire where the enemy who had pursued them so long had taken up their abode for the night; "for," said he, "as they must suppose us totally scattered and fled, it is likely that they will think

themselves quite secure and disperse themselves into distant quarters and keep careless watch."

"That is very true," answered James of Douglas, "for I passed a village where there are two hundred of them quartered, who had placed no sentinels, and if you have a mind to make haste, we may surprise them this very night and do them more mischief than they have been able to do us during all this day's chase."

Then there was nothing to do but mount and ride, and as the Scots came by surprise on the body of English whom Douglas had mentioned, and rushed suddenly into the village where they were, they easily cut them to pieces; thus, as Douglas had said, doing their pursuers more injury than they themselves had received during the long and severe pursuit of the preceding day.

LOCHINVAR

O young Lochinvar is come out of the West,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best,
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone:
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
 He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
 The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
 For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of braye Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
 Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers,
 and all;

Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
 (For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
 "Oh come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied;
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
 And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
 There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet; the knight took it up;
 He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
 She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
 With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
 He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar,
 "Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.



ON THE ESK.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
 That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;
 While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
 And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume.

And the bridemaids whispered, "'Twere better
by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young
Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger
stood near,

So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung.

"She is won! we are gone! over bank bush, and
scaur—

They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby
clan,

Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and
they ran :

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see,
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE HOMELESS ROYALISTS

WE were always sure of a pleasant quiet hour with Captain Marryat's books. Jock called him, Captain Hook, or the Pirate, but that was because of the poem "Odds, bobs, hammer and tongs," which Captain Marryat had written, and which he was never tired of repeating. This used to make Pen very angry, for she said that there was very little of the pirate about the man who wrote *The Children of the New Forest*, which she liked best of all his books. Jock, however, liked *Masterman Ready*, and especially those parts which told about Tommy and his pranks.

One day we made a little play of the first part of Pen's favourite volume, and it went very well. Here it is :

SCENE I

*The apartment of Miss Judith Villiers at Arnwood,
on the borders of the New Forest.*

[The old lady, about fifty years of age, very prim and starched, is discovered sitting in a high-backed chair, with her feet upon a stool and her hands crossed before her, her black mittens reposing upon her snow-white apron.]

(*Enter the forester, Jacob Armitage.*)

Miss Villiers. You have important business with us, I am told.

Jacob. Most important, madam. In the first place, it is right that you should be informed that his Majesty, King Charles, has escaped from Hampton Court.

Miss Villiers. His Majesty escaped !

Jacob. Yes ; and is supposed to be secreted somewhere in this neighbourhood. His Majesty is not in this house, madam, I presume ?

Miss Villiers. Jacob, his Majesty is not in this house ; if he were, I would suffer my tongue to be torn out sooner than I would confess it, even to you.

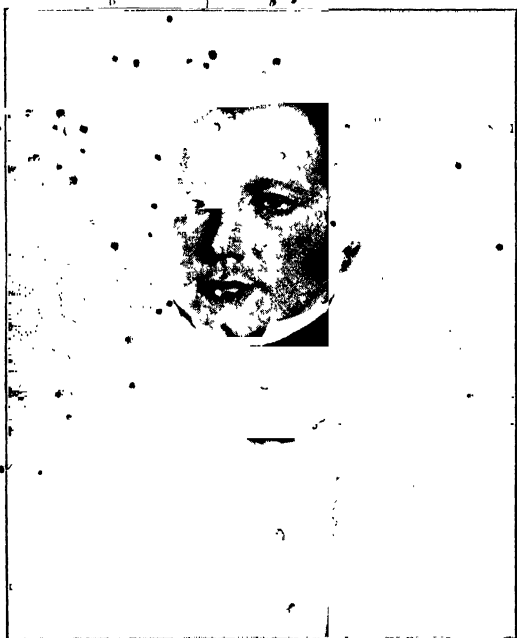
Jacob. But I have more for your private ear, madam.

Miss Villiers. You may proceed.

Jacob. In the forest this morning I overheard a band of troopers declare their intention of burning down this house to-night. It is necessary that we should immediately abandon the place as it will be impossible for us to oppose the troopers.

Miss Villiers. And where am I to go, Jacob ?

Jacob. I hardly know, madam ; there is my cottage, it is but a poor place and not fit for one like you.



CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

From a painting by J. Simpson in the National Portrait Gallery.

Miss Villiers. So I should presume, Jacob Armistage, neither shall I accept your offer. It would ill-befit the dignity of a Villiers to be frightened out of her abode by a party of rude soldiers. Happen what will, I shall not stir from this—no, not even from this chair. Neither do I consider the danger so great as you suppose. Let Benjamin saddle, and

be prepared to ride over to Lymington immediately; I will give him a letter to the magistrate there, who will send us protection. "

Jacob. But, madam, the children cannot remain here. I promised my dear master, Colonel——

Miss Villiers. Will the children be in more danger than I shall be, Jacob Armitage? They dare not ill-treat me—they may force the buttery and drink the ale—they may make merry with that and the venison which you have brought with you, I presume, but they will hardly venture to insult a lady of the house of Villiers.

Jacob. I fear they will venture anything, madam. At all events, they will frighten the children, and for one night they will be better in my cottage.

Miss Villiers. Well then, be it so; take them to your cottage, and take Martha to attend upon the two Miss Beverleys. Go down and desire Agatha to come to me, and Benjamin to saddle as fast as he can. [Exit Jacob, in deep thought.]

¶

SCENE II

The garden of Arnwood, in which are discovered at play Edward, Humphrey, Alice, and Edith Beverley, aged thirteen, twelve, eleven, and eight years respectively. Jacob calls the boys to him and draws them away from their sisters.

Jacob. Now, Master Edward, you must prove yourself your father's own son. We must leave this house immediately ; come up with me to your rooms and help me to pack the clothes, for we must go to my cottage this night. There is no time to be lost.

Edward. But why, Jacob ? I must know why.

Jacob. Because the Parliamentary troopers will burn down the house this night.

Edward. Burn it down ! Why, the house is mine, is it not ? Who dares to burn down this house ?

Jacob. They will dare it, and will do it.

Edward. But we will fight them, Jacob ; we can bolt and bar ; I can fire a gun, and hit too, as you know ; then there's Benjamin and you.

Jacob. And what can you and two men do against a troop of horse, my dear boy ? If we could defend the place against them, Jacob Armitage would be the first ; but it is impossible, my dear boy. Recollect your sisters. Would you have them burnt to death or shot by these wretches ? No, no, Master Edward, you must do as I say, and lose no time. Let us pack up what will be most useful, and load White Billy with the bundles ; then you must all come to the cottage with me, and we will make it out how we can.

Humphrey. That will be jolly ! Come, Edward.

[Edward hangs back, but Jacob persuades him to enter the house. Shortly afterwards they come out again with a number of bundles.

Jacob. Your aunt said Martha was to go with your sisters, but I doubt if she will ; and I think we shall have no room for her, for the cottage is small enough.

Humphrey. Oh no, we don't want her. Alice always dresses Edith and herself too, ever since mamma died.

Jacob. Now we will carry down the bundles, and you make them fast on the pony while I go for your sisters.

Edward. But where does Aunt Judith go ?

Jacob. She will not leave the house, Master Edward ; she intends to stay and speak to the troopers.

Edward. And so an old woman like her remains to face the enemy, while I run away from them ! I will not go !

Jacob. Well, Master Edward, you must do as you please, but it will be cruel to leave your sisters here ; they and Humphrey must come with me, and I cannot manage to get them to the cottage unless you go with us ; it is not far and you can return in a very short time.

[Edward *nods his head in assent.* The pony is loaded, and the little girls called in by Humphrey. They are told that they are going to pass the night in the cottage, and are delighted at the idea.]

Jacob. Now, Master Edward, will you take your sisters by the hand and lead them to the cottage? Here is the key of the door. (*Hands it over.*) Master Humphrey can lead the pony, and, Master Edward (*leading him aside*), I'll tell you one thing which I will not mention before your brother and sisters. The troopers are all about the New Forest, for King Charles has escaped and they are seeking for him. You must not, therefore, leave your brother and sisters till I return. Lock the cottage door as soon as it is dark. You know where to get a light, over the cupboard; and my gun is loaded and hangs above the mantel-piece. You must do your best if they attempt to force an entrance; but above all, promise me not to leave them till I return. I will remain here to see what I can do with your aunt, and when I come back we can then decide how to act.

SCENE III .

The apartment of Miss Judith. The darkness is falling, and the maid, Agatha, has just brought in the lamp. Jacob enters and stands before Miss Villiers.

Jacob. I wish, madam, you would be persuaded to leave the house for this night.

Miss Villiers. Jacob Armitage, leave this house I will not, if it were filled with troopers ; I have said so.

Jacob. But, madam——

Miss Villiers (haughtily). No more, sir ; you are too forward.

Jacob. But, madam——

Miss Villiers. Leave my presence, Jacob Armitage, and never appear again. Quit the room and send Agatha here.

Jacob. She has left, madam, and so has the cook, and Martha went away with Benjamin ; when I leave you will be alone.

Miss Villiers. They have dared to leave ?

Jacob. They dared not stay, madam.

Miss Villiers. Leave me, Jacob Armitage, and shut the door when you go out. (*Jacob hesitates.*) Obey me instantly. (*Jacob goes out.*)

What happened next is told in Captain Marryat's story, entitled *The Children of the New Forest*.



SPRING

THE Year's at the Spring
 And day's at the morn ;
 Morning's at seven ;
 The hill-side's dew-pearl'd ;
 The lark's on the wing ;
 The snail's on the thorn ,
 God's in his heaven—
 All's right with the world !

WHEN daffodils begin to peer,
 With heigh ! the doxy¹ over the dale,
 Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year ;
 For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

¹ Daffling

TOMMY'S PRANKS ..

To understand these stories of Tommy in *Masterman Ready* you must remember : -

1. That Tommy was one of the Seagrave family who set sail from England, to return to their home in Australia, on board a ship named the *Pacific*.

2. That on the way the vessel called at Cape Town, where the Seagrave family landed to see the sights.

3. That, later, the *Pacific* was wrecked, and the family found themselves on an island in mid-ocean with the old sailor, Masterman Ready.

4. That the rest of the story tells how they made the best of it.

5. That it will not be very wise to read these stories of Tommy without reading the rest of the book.

I. TOMMY AND THE LIONS

The next morning, Captain Osborn lowered down one of the large boats, and Mr. Seagrave, accompanied by Captain Osborn, went on shore with William and Tommy. Tommy had promised his mamma to be very good ; but that he always did, and almost always forgot his promise, directly he was out of sight.

As soon as they landed, they went up to a gentle-

man's house, with whom Captain Osborn was acquainted. They stayed for a few minutes to drink a glass of lemonade, for it was very warm ; and then it was proposed that they should go to the Company's Gardens and see the wild beasts which were confined there, at which William was much delighted and Tommy clapped his hands with joy.

"What are the Company's Gardens, papa?" inquired William.

"They were made by the Dutch East-India Company at the time that the Cape of Good Hope was in their possession. They are, properly speaking, Botanical Gardens, but, at the same time, the wild animals are kept there. Formerly there were a great many, but they have not been paid attention to lately, for we have plenty of these animals in England now."

"What shall we see?" said Tommy.

"You will see lions, Tommy, a great many in a large den together," said Captain Osborn.

"Oh! I want to see a lion."

"You must not go too near them, recollect."

"No, I won't," said Tommy.

As soon as they entered the gates, Tommy escaped from Captain Osborn, and ran away in his hurry to see the lions ; but Captain Osborn caught him again, and held him fast by the hand.

They continued their walk until they came to the den of the lions. It was a large place enclosed with a strong and high wall of stone, with only one window to it for the visitor to look at them, as it was open above. This window was wide, and with strong iron bars running from the top to the bottom; but the width between the bars was such that a lion could put his paw out with ease; and they were therefore cautioned not to go too near.

It was a fine sight to see eight or ten of these noble-looking animals lying down in various attitudes, quite indifferent apparently to the people outside—basking in the sun, and slowly moving their tufted tails to and fro.

William examined them at a respectful distance from the bars, and so did Tommy, who had his mouth wide open with astonishment, in which there was at first not a little fear mixed; but he soon got bolder.

The gentleman, who had accompanied them, and who had been long at the Cape, was relating to Mr. Seagrave and Captain Osborn some very curious anecdotes about the lion. William and they were so interested that they did not perceive that Tommy had slipped back to the grated window of their den.

Tommy looked at the lions, and then he wanted to make them move about: there was one fine full-

grown young lion about three years old, who was lying down nearest to the window, and Tommy took up a stone and threw it at him : the lion appeared not to notice it, for he did not move, although he fixed his eyes upon Tommy ; so Tommy became more brave, and threw another, and then another, approaching each time nearer to the bars of the window.

All of a sudden the lion gave a tremendous roar, and sprang at Tommy, bounding against the iron bars of the cage with such force that, had they not been very strong, it must have broken them. As it was, they shook and rattled so that pieces of mortar fell from the stones.

Tommy shrieked, and, fortunately for himself, fell back and tumbled head over heels, or the lion's paws would have reached him. Captain Osborn and Mr. Seagrave ran up to Tommy, and picked him up ; he roared with fright as soon as he could fetch his breath, while the lion stood at the bars, lashing his tail, snarling, and showing his enormous fangs.

"Take me away—take me on board the ship," cried Tommy, who was terribly frightened.

"What did you do, Tommy ?" said Captain Osborn.

"I won't throw any more stones, Mr. Lion ; I

won't, indeed," cried Tommy, looking terrified towards the animal.

Mr. Seagrave scolded Tommy well for his foolish conduct, and by degrees he became more composed; but he did not recover himself until they had walked some distance away from the lions' den.

Then they looked at the other animals which were to be seen, Tommy keeping a most respectful distance from every one of them. He wouldn't even go near to a Cape sheep with a broad tail.

II. CASTOR-OIL BEANS

Master Tommy had been very troublesome during the whole of the morning; he had not learnt his lesson, and had put a cinder into Caroline's hand and burnt her. He was therefore, as soon as his father was told of his bad behaviour, condemned to go without his dinner; and he sat down very sulky, looking very wistfully at the victuals as they disappeared; but he did not cry or ask to be forgiven.

After dinner was over, Mrs. Seagrave requested her husband, as he was about to go down to the point with the spade and a small hatchet in his hand, to take Tommy with him, as she had a great deal to do and could not watch him as well as the baby and

Caroline. So Mr. Seagrave took Master Tommy by the hand, and led him to the point, and made him sit down close to him while he cleared away the brushwood.

Mr. Seagrave worked very hard, and when he had cut down and cleared a portion of the ground, he made Tommy carry away to a little distance, and pile in a heap, the bushes which he had cleared away. This Tommy did very unwillingly, as he was in a bad humour. When Mr. Seagrave had cleared away a large piece of ground with his hatchet, he then took his spade to dig at the roots and turn up the mould, leaving Tommy to amuse himself.

What Tommy did for about an hour, during which Mr. Seagrave worked very diligently, his father did not observe; but all of a sudden he began to cry, and when his father asked him the reason he did not answer, but only cried the more, until at last he put his hands to his waist and roared most lustily.

As he appeared to be in very great pain, his father left off work and led him up to the tent, when Mrs. Seagrave came out, alarmed at his cries. He would, however, do nothing but roar, refusing to answer any questions; and his father and mother could not imagine what was the matter with him.

Old Ready, who had heard Master Tommy

screaming for so long a while, thought that there might be something serious and left his work to ascertain the cause. When he heard what had passed he said:

“ Depend upon it, sir, the child has eaten something which has made him ill. Tell me, Tommy, what did you eat when you were down there? ”

“ Berries,” roared Tommy.

“ I thought as much, ma’am,” said Ready. “ I must go and see what the berries were.” And the old man hastened down to the place where Mr. Seagrave had been at work. In the meantime, Mrs. Seagrave had been much alarmed lest the child should have poisoned himself, and Mr. Seagrave went to search among the medicines for some castor-oil.

Ready returned just as Mr. Seagrave came back to the tent with the bottle of castor-oil, and he told Ready that he was about to give Tommy a dose.

“ Well, sir,” replied Ready, who had a plant in his hand, “ I don’t think you should give him any, for it appears to me that he has taken too much already. See, sir, this is, if I recollect right—and I’m almost sure that I am right—the castor-oil plant, and here are some of the castor-oil beans, which Master Tommy has been eating. Tell me, Tommy, did you eat them? ”

“ Yes,” cried Tommy, who was still in very great pain.

“ I thought so : give him a little warm drink, ma’am, and he’ll soon be better : there’s no great harm done ; and it will teach him not to eat berries or beans again.”

What Ready said was true ; nevertheless Master Tommy was very ill for the whole of the day, and was put into bed *very* early.

III. A. PRISONER IN THE HEN-HOUSE

A few mornings afterwards, Juno the black cook, came in before breakfast with six eggs in her apron, which she had found in the hen-house.

“ Look, Missy Seagrave—fowls lay eggs—soon have plenty—plenty for Master William—make him well again—and plenty for chickens by and by.”

“ You haven’t taken them all out of the nests, Juno, have you ? ”

“ No, missy—leave one in each nest for hen to sec.”

“ Well, then, we will keep them for William, and I hope, as you say, it will make him strong again.”

“ I am getting quite strong now, mother,” replied William ; “ I think it would be better to leave the eggs for the hens to sit upon.”

“No, no, William ; your health is of more consequence than having early chickens.”

“Tommy likes eggs very much,” said Tommy.

“Yes, but Tommy cannot have any at present ; Tommy is not ill.”

“Tommy feel sick,” replied Tommy.

“I’m afraid that you are a little story-teller, Tommy ; and if you feel sick, eggs would be bad for you.”

“Tommy got a headache,” replied the boy.

“Eggs are not good for headaches, Tommy,” replied his father.

“Tommy ill all over,” replied Tommy again.

“Then Tommy must be put to bed and have a dose of castor-oil.”

“Tommy don’t want castor-oil ; Tommy wants eggs.”

“Yes, but Tommy won’t get eggs,” replied his father, “so he may as well leave off telling fibs ; when there are plenty of eggs, Tommy will have one, if he is a good boy, and not otherwise.”

“I have promised Caroline that she is to take care of the chickens,” said Mrs. Seagrave, “and I think she must have the egg department also ; she promises to be a very useful little girl.”

For a few days Mr. Seagrave and Ready were employed at the garden clearing away the weeds,



JUNO, THE BLACK COOK •

which had begun to sprout up along with the seeds, which had been sown ; during which time William recovered very fast. The two 'first days' Juno brought in three or four eggs regularly, but on the third day there were none to be found.

On the fourth day the hens appeared also not to have laid, much to the surprise of Mrs. Seagrave ; as when hens commence laying eggs they usually continue. On the fifth morning, when they sat down to breakfast, Master Tommy did not make his appearance, and Mrs. Seagrave asked where he was.

" I suspect, madam," said old Ready, laughing, " that Master Tommy will not come either to his breakfast or his dinner to-day."

" What can you mean, Ready ? " said Mrs. Seagrave.

" Why, madam, I will tell you. I thought it very odd that there were no eggs, and I thought it probable that the hens might have laid astray, so I went about yesterday evening to search. I could not find any eggs, but I found the egg-shells hid under some cocoanut leaves, and I argued that if an animal, supposing there was any on the island, had taken the eggs, it would not have been so careful to hide the egg-shells. So this morning I fastened up the door of the hen-house, and only left open the little sliding-door by which the fowls go in to roost ;

and then, after you were up, I watched behind the trees, and saw Master Tommy come out and go to the hen-house. He tried the door, and finding it fast, he then crept into the hen-house by the little sliding door. As soon as he was in, I let down the slide and fastened it with a nail; so there he is, caught in his own trap."

"And there shall he remain all day, the little glutton!" said Mr. Seagrave, who was much amused.

"Yes, it will serve him right," replied Mrs. Seagrave, "and be a lesson to him. We will take no notice of him whatever, if he halloos and screams for an hour,"

"Oh, Massa Tommy, me very glad you cotch at last; teach you not to suck eggs," said Juno: "now you get nothing to eat; you not like that."

Mr. Seagrave, Ready, and William, as usual, went down to their work; Mrs. Seagrave and Juno, with little Caroline, were busy indoors. Tommy remained very quiet for an hour, when he commenced roaring; but it was of no use, no one paid any attention to him. At dinner-time he began to roar again, but with as little success: it was not till the evening that the door of the hen-house was opened and Master Tommy permitted to come out. He looked very foolish, and sat down in a corner without speaking.

"Well, Master Tommy, how many eggs did you suck to-day?" said Ready.

"Tommy won't suck eggs any more," said the urchin.

"No, you had better not," replied Mr. Seagrave, "or you will find, in the end, that you will have less to eat, instead of more, as you have this day."

"I want my dinner," said Tommy.

"You'll have no dinner this day, you may be sure," said Mrs. Seagrave; "we can't allow you dinner and eggs both; and if you cry, I will lock you up in the hen-house all night; you must now wait patiently till supper-time."

Tommy found that he could not help himself, so he waited very quietly and very sulkily till supper was ready, when he made up for lost time.

A SKATING SONG.

[We tried this poem one very hot summer day and it had a cooling effect.]

AWAY! away! our fires stream bright

Along the frozen river;

And their arrowy sparkles of frosty light

On the forest branches quiver.

Away ! away ! for the stars are forth,
And on the pure snows of the valley,
In a giddy trance, the moonbeams dance—
Come, let us our comrades rally !

Away ! away ! o'er the sheeted ice,
Away, away we go ;
On our steel-bound feet, we move as fleet
As deer o'er the Lapland snow.
What though the sharp north winds are out,
The skater heeds them not—
'Midst the laugh and shout of the jocund rout
Gray winter is forgot.

Let others choose more gentle sports,
By the side of the winter hearth ;
Or 'neath the lamps of the festal halls
Seek for their share of mirth ;
But as for me, away ! away !
Where the merry skaters be—
Where the fresh wind blows, and the smooth ice glows.
There is the place for me.

EPHRAIM PEABODY.

TOM BROWN

WHEN Pen and Jock heard that the author of *Tom Brown's School-days* was a close friend of Charles Kingsley, who wrote the *Water Babies*, they took even more interest in the school story which was a favourite book in our summer porch. The writer was Thomas Hughes, and when he wrote his book he was telling of things he had seen for himself, for he had been a Rugby boy of the best kind, and was always a lover of the open air, of the truth, and of cold water.

Pen particularly liked the story of little Tom's letter written at his first school. Jock would often ask for the tale of the blanket-tossing. Here are the two stories for you.

I. TOM'S FIRST SCHOOL LETTER

Poor little Tom was made dreadfully unhappy in his first week by a catastrophe which happened to his first letter home.

With huge labour he had, on the very evening of his arrival, managed to fill two sides of a sheet of letter-paper with assurances of his love for dear mamma, his happiness at school, and his resolves to do all she would wish. This missive, with the



1004 11-

help of the boy who sat at the desk next him, also a new arrival, he managed to fold successfully, but, this done, they were sadly put to it for means of sealing. Envelopes were then unknown, they had no wax, and dared not disturb the stillness of the evening's school-room by getting up and going to ask the usher for some.

At length, Tom's friend, being of an ingenious turn of mind, suggested sealing with ink, and the letter was accordingly stuck down with a blob of ink, and duly handed by Tom, on his way to bed, to the housekeeper to be posted.

It was not till four days afterwards that the good dame sent for him, and produced the precious letter and some wax, saying, "Oh, Master Brown, I forgot to tell you before, but your letter isn't sealed.", Poor Tom took the wax in silence and sealed his letter, with a huge lump rising in his throat during the process, and then ran away to a quiet corner of the playground, and burst into an agony of tears.

The idea of his mother waiting day after day for the letter he had promised her at once, and perhaps thinking him forgetful of her, when he had done all in his power to make good his promise, was as bitter a grief as any which he had to undergo for many a long year. His wrath then was proportionately violent when he was aware of two boys, who stopped

close by him, and one of whom, a fat gaby of a fellow, pointed at him and called him "Young mammy-sick!" Whereupon Tom arose, and giving vent thus to his grief and shame and rage, smote his derider on the nose, and made it bleed, which sent that young worthy howling to the usher, who reported Tom for violent and unprovoked assault and battery.

Hitting in the face was punishable with flogging; but Tom escaped the penalty by pleading *primum tempus* (first offence); and having written a second letter to his mother, inclosing some forget-me-nots which he picked on their first half-holiday walk, felt quite happy again, and began to enjoy vastly a good deal of his new life.

II. FIRST DAY AT RUGBY—THE BLANKET-TOSSING

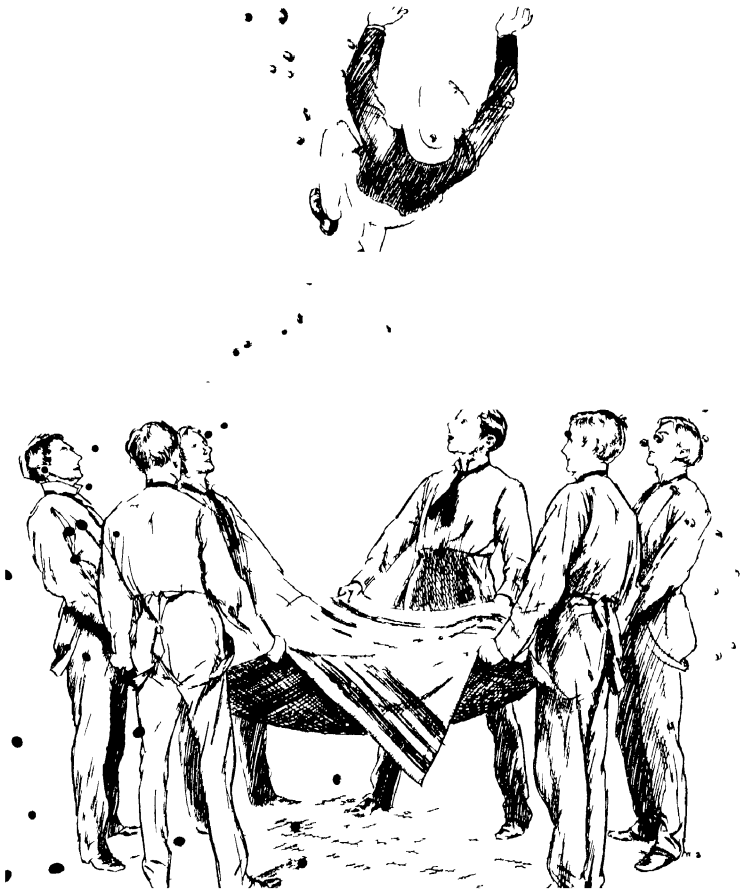
The quarter to ten struck, and the prayer-bell rang. The sixth- and fifth-form boys ranged themselves in their school order along the wall, on either side of the great fires, the middle-fifth and upper-school boys round the long table in the middle of the hall, and the lower-school boys round the upper part of the second long table, which ran down the side of the hall furthest from the fires.

Here Tom found himself at the bottom of all in a state of mind and body not at all fit for prayers

as he thought, and so tried hard to make himself serious, but couldn't, for the life of him, do anything but repeat in his head the choruses of some of the songs, and stare at all the boys opposite, wondering at the brilliancy of their waistcoats, and speculating what sort of fellows they were.

The steps of the head porter are heard on the stairs, and a light gleams at the door. "Hush!" from the fifth-form boys who stand there, and then in strides the Doctor, cap on head, book in one hand, and gathering up his gown in the other. He walks up the middle, and takes his post by Warner, who begins calling over the names.

The Doctor takes no notice of anything, but quietly turns over his book and finds the place, and then stands, cap in hand and finger in book, looking straight before his nose. He knows better than any one when to look, and when to see nothing; to-night is singing night, and there has been lots of noise, and no harm done, though some of them do look hot and excited. So the Doctor sees nothing, but fascinates Tom in a horrible manner as he stands there and reads out the Psalm in that deep, ringing, searching voice of his. Prayers are over, and Tom still stares open-mouthed after the Doctor's retiring figure, when he feels a pull at his sleeve, and, turning round, sees East.



"THERE'LL BE TOSSING TONIGHT!"

"I say, were you ever tossed in a blanket?"

"No," said Tom; "why?"

"'Cause there'll be tossing to-night, most likely, before the sixth come up to bed. So, if you funk, you just come along and hide, or else they'll catch you and toss you."

"Were you ever tossed? Does it hurt?" inquired Tom.

"Oh, yes, bless you, a dozen times," said East, as he hobbled along by Tom's side upstairs. "It doesn't hurt unless you fall on the floor. But most fellows don't like it."

They stopped at the fireplace in the top passage, where a crowd of small boys were whispering together, and evidently unwilling to go up into the bedrooms. In a minute, however, a study door opened, and a sixth-form boy came out, and off they all scuttled up the stairs, and then noiselessly dispersed to their different rooms. Tom's heart beat rather quick as he and East reached their room, but he had made up his mind. "I shan't hide, East," said he.

"Very well, old fellow," replied East, evidently pleased; "no more shall I—they'll be here for us directly."

The room was a great big one with a dozen beds in it, but not a boy that Tom could see except East and himself. East pulled off his coat and waistcoat,

and then sat on the bottom of his bed whistling and pulling off his boots ; Tom followed his example.

A noise and steps are heard in the passage, the door opens, and in rush four or five great fifth-form boys, headed by Flashman, the bully, in his glory.

Tom and East slept in the further corner of the room, and were not seen at first.

"Gone to ground, eh?" roared Flashman; "push 'em out then, boys! Look under the beds": and he pulled up the little white curtain of the one nearest him. "Who-o-op," he roared, pulling away at the leg of a small boy, who held on tight to the leg of the bed, and sung out lustily for mercy.

"Here, lend a hand, one of you, and help me pull out this young howling brute. Hold your tongue, sir, or I'll kill you."

"Oh, please, Flashman, please, Walker, don't toss me! I'll fag for you, I'll do anything, only don't toss me."

"You be hanged," said Flashman, lugging the wretched boy along, "'twon't hurt you—you! Come along, boys, here he is."

"I say, Flashey," sung out another of the big boys, "drop that; you heard what old Pater Brooke said to-night. I'll be hanged if we'll toss any one against their will—no more bullying. Let him go, I say."

Flashman, with an oath and a kick, released his

prey, who rushed headlong under his bed again, for fear they should change their minds, and crept along underneath the other beds, till he got under that of the sixth-form boy, which he knew they daren't disturb.

"There's plenty of youngsters don't care about it," said Walker. "Here, here's Scud East—you'll be tossed won't you, young 'un?" Scud was East's nickname, or Black, as we called it, gained by his fleetness of foot.

"Yes," said East, "if you like, only mind my foot."

"And here's another who didn't hide. Hullo! new boy; what's your name, sir?"

"Brown."

"Well, Whitey Brown, you don't mind being tossed?"

"No," said Tom, setting his teeth.

"Come along, then, boys," sung out Walker, and away they all went, carrying along Tom and East to the intense relief of four or five other small boys, who crept out from under the beds and behind them.

"What a trump Scud is!" said one. "They won't come back here now."

"And that new boy, too; he must be a good plucked one."

“ Ah ! wait'till he has been tossed on to the floor ; see how he'll like it then ? ”

Meantime the procession went down the passage to Number 7, the largest room, and the scene of the tossing, in the middle of which was a great open space. Here they joined other parties of the bigger boys, each with a captive or two, some willing to be tossed, some sullen, and some frightened to death. At Walker's suggestion all who were afraid were let off, in honour of Pater Brooke's speech.

Then a dozen big boys seized hold of a blanket, dragged from one of the beds. “ In with Scud ! quick, there's no time to lose.” East was chucked into the blanket. “ Once, twice, thrice, and away ! ” up he went like a shuttlecock, but not quite up to the ceiling.

“ Now, boys, with a will,” cried Walker, “ once, twice, thrice, and away ! ” This time he went clean up, and kept himself from touching the ceiling with his hand, and so again a third time, when he was turned out, and up went another boy. And then came Tom's turn. He lay quite still, by East's advice, and didn't dislike the “ once, twice, thrice,” but the “ away ” wasn't so pleasant.

They were in good wind now, and sent him slap up to the ceiling first time, against which his knees came rather sharply. But the moment's pause

before descending was the rub, the feeling of utter helplessness and of leaving his whole inside behind him sticking to the ceiling. Tom was very near shouting to be set down, when he found himself back in the blanket, but thought of East and didn't, and so took his three tosses without a kick or a cry, and was called a young trump for his pains.

He and East, having earned it, stood now looking on. No catastrophe happened, as all the captives were cool hands, and didn't struggle. This didn't suit Flashman. What your real bully likes in tossing is when the boys kick and struggle or hold on to one side of the blanket, and so get pitched bodily on to the floor; it's no fun to him when no one is hurt or frightened.

"Let's toss two of them together, Walker," suggested he.

"What a wretched bully you are, Flashey!" rejoined the other. "Up with another one."

And so no two boys were tossed together, the peculiar hardship of which is that it's too much for human nature to lie still then and share troubles, and so the wretched pair of small boys struggle in the air which shall fall a-top in the descent, to the no small risk of both falling out of the blanket, and the huge delight of brutes like Flashman.

But now there's a cry that the præpostor of the

oom is coming, so the tossing stops, and all scatter to their different rooms ; and Tom is left to turn in, with the first day's experience of a public school to meditate upon.



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